



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



—



1

1







A
CRITICAL
AND
CANDID EXAMINATION
OF A

LATE PUBLICATION, ENTITLED
THE
Doctrine of Eternal Misery,
RECONCILEABLE WITH THE INFINITE BE-
NEVOLENCE OF GOD;

AND A TRUTH PLAINLY ASSERTED IN THE
CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES.

BY NATHAN STRONG, A. M.
PASTOR OF THE NORTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN HARTFORD.

BY DAN FOSTER, A. M.

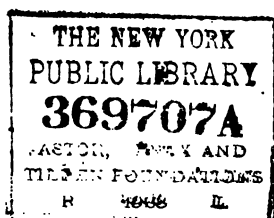
*The Lord is good to all : and his tender mercies are over all
his works. Psalm cxlv. 9.*

PRINTED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS.

WALPOLE, NEWHAMPSHIRE.
PRINTED FOR THOMAS & THOMAS,
BY DAVID NEWHALL,

1803.

P



Preface.

IN the following Examination, the reader may possibly find the grand system of creation and divine moral government represented, in a manner different from that in which he hath been accustomed to consider it. But, as we are all liable to err, let him reflect that it is as likely he should be mistaken now, in his ideas of the mediatorial dispensation, as that I should have been mistaken in mine, ten or fifteen years ago. That a proposition is new to us, or different from what we have been acquainted with, is no sign that it is false. I shall first present the reader with some considerations of the divine benevolence, as displayed in the creation and government of men. In this part of the work, it will be my principal endeavour to refute Mr. S's system of divine benevolence, which is his sole foundation to build his fabric of eternal misery upon.

If Mr. S. be totally mistaken in his ideas of the divine benevolence, his whole scheme of eternal misery is subverted, as this scheme depends entirely on his ideas of divine benevolence for its support. If his notion of the general good, the good of the public, or the greatest glory and blessedness of God, and his holy intelligent kingdom, as being the sole object of the divine benevolence, and yet necessarily produced by eternal sin and misery, be wrong and mistaken;

taken ; all he hath written fails of its design, the support of the doctrine of eternal misery. That his notion of these things is wrong, is plain and undeniable, from the single consideration, that it is reduceable to the most monstrous absurdity ; which the reader will clearly see as he proceeds. No doctrine that is true can possibly be reduced to absurdity. I wish the reader to pay strict attention to this important point, the refutation of Mr S.'s doctrine of benevolence. If he shall be convinced that this is fairly and truly done, all the rest will be easy ; since it is absolutely impossible to support the doctrine of eternal misery, on any other plan of divine benevolence. Indeed, there are but two hypotheses of the divine benevolence, that brought forward by Mr. S. and that which I have insisted upon, in opposition to Mr. S. If his be wrong, therefore, mine is right. And if my theory of divine benevolence be just, the doctrine of eternal misery cannot be defended.

The reader will next be presented with the inquiry, whether it be not the benevolent and gracious plan of God, that all men shall, eventually, be virtuous and happy. Mr. S. allows that such an exposition of the doctrine of divine benevolence, as I have given, signifies the same thing, as that all men will be saved. This is readily conceded. But if that exposition of divine benevolence, which I have given, be proved, instead of being taken for granted, as Mr. S's is, this is all we want. That interpretation of the word benevolence, which is substantially supported by reason and scripture, is doubtless the true one, though

PREFACE.

v

though it should happen to signify the same thing, as that all men will be saved. If I have refuted Mr. S.'s idea of divine benevolence, my own remains to be the true one ; as I before observed. To destroy Mr. S.'s theory of divine benevolence, was my first object. I have then produced many passages of Scripture, both from the Old and New Testaments, in support of my theory of the divine benevolence, and to show that it really is the benevolent plan of God, that all men shall, eventually, be virtuous and happy. That passage of the prophet Ezekiel, concerning the eventual restoration of the Sodomites, the ancient wicked and abandoned inhabitants of Samaria, with the like wicked inhabitants of Judea, and their final salvation, is a striking instance of divine benevolence towards the worst of men. And if God be so benevolent towards the worst of men, that have ever lived on the earth, as to desire and design their restoration to virtue and happiness ; it must be considered as a substantial proof that he desires and designs the virtue and happiness of all men.

In the third part of this work, I have gone through with the examination of all the passages of scripture which Mr. S. has adduced as proof of the doctrine of eternal misery. These passages of scripture I have considered and endeavoured to answer, as so many objections against my theory of the divine benevolence, and universal salvation. Future misery is the utmost that can be proved, from any passage of scripture Mr. S. has adduced, without any regard to the duration of that misery. From the justice
and

and goodness of the divine nature, we might safely and positively determine that future misery will have an end, if it were not demonstrated by scripture as it is in a variety of passages. As, where it is declared that Christ came to destroy the works of the devil, which are moral and physical evil. Also, *that he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet ; and destroyed the last enemy, death.* These, and many others as I have shown, give us the utmost assurance, that neither sin nor death, moral nor physical evil, shall have existence in the universe when Jesus shall deliver up the mediatorial kingdom.

I have also endeavoured to answer that grand objection against the doctrine of universal salvation, that it tends to evil, and to licentious manners. I desire the reader would carefully and candidly consider what I have written in answer to this objection. I think I have made it undeniably plain, that the doctrine of eternal misery tends, directly and naturally, to destroy all piety and morality, all faith and hope, and love, and joy, and every pious affection ; and all justice, kindness, and mercy towards mankind.

In the last part, I have addressed the clergy and people of the United States. In this address, I have attempted a brief view of the two very different systems ; that of eternal misery, and that of universal holiness and happiness, with their different effects on the minds and manners of men. This is a general view of what the reader may expect in the following work ; all which is now submitted to his candid perusal and judgment.

A CRITICAL





C R I T I C A L
A N D
C A N D I D E X A M I N A T I O N .

PART FIRST.

I PROPOSE to conduct this examination in the following method ;

I. The first part will consist of some considerations of the divine benevolence, as displayed in the creation and government of men.

II. An enquiry, whether it be not the benevolent and gracious plan of God, that all men shall, eventually, be virtuous and happy.

III. Some of the most material objections against such a plan fairly stated and answered.

IV. A kind and generous address to the clergy and people of the United States.

I. Some considerations of the divine benevolence as displayed in the creation and government of men.

Just

am unacquainted with, my confidence in the divine character is such, that I make myself entirely easy. I desire no man to say more.

I wish I could obtain a clear and correct idea of what Mr. S. means by *the greatest possible quantity of happiness*. Whether he means, the greatest quantity of happiness enjoyed by the intelligent universe, Creator and creatures ; or by all intelligent creatures ; or by the human kind only ; is not clear. It appears to me that clear and distinct ideas here will be specially serviceable in our inquiries.

Mr. S. says, that, by the expressions *public good, general good, the good, or glory, or blessedness of the whole*, " are meant the greatest glory and blessedness of God, and his holy intelligent kingdom ;" and he adds, " this eminently comprizes the glory and blessedness of God." In p. 109, he says, " They also suppose, on the testimony which God hath given of what he will do, that those who argue against a future punishment, however awful it may be to individuals, or however honest they may feel to themselves, are opposing the best, the greatest, and the eternal interests of God and his kingdom."

As we shall soon find that Mr. S. considers the divine benevolence to be, a constant and invariable regard to the greatest good or happiness, of the intellectual system ; and that this greatest good, or happiness, of the intellectual system may be preserved, though multitudes of intellectual creatures be eternally miserable : nay, farther, that this supreme good,

or

or happiness, may be promoted and advanced by the eternal misery of millions of human beings : it becomes absolutely necessary, that we most accurately fix and ascertain some just ideas of the *greatest quantity of happiness* in the intellectual system.

If, by *the greatest possible quantity of happiness* Mr. S. means, *the greatest public or general good, the greatest glory, or blessedness of the whole*, which, he says, means, the greatest glory and blessedness of God, and his holy intelligent kingdom ; then we have obtained his ideas. Now, then, we may proceed one step farther. This greatest glory and blessedness of God, and his holy, intelligent kingdom, Mr. S. says, may consist with the eternal misery of individuals, be promoted by it, and, farther still, that this eternal misery is a necessary mean of producing it. Take his own words. " We may therefore be assured, that the infinitely benevolent, all-wise and all-powerful God, will eternally execute such a government, as will make blessedness in the universe *the greatest that is possible*. It is doubtless on this principle, that he hath admitted moral and natural evil into his government. Not because he delights in either sin or misery ; or views them as good in their own nature ; but because they are *the necessary means of producing the greatest good*." Mr. S. and the public will permit me, in character of examiner, to be critical, whilst I am candid. I solemnly declare that I have no interest to serve, in this examination, but that of truth. The glory of God and the good of mankind are my motive. I
propose

propose the following, as a general method of procedure, in this examination ; first, to state, clearly and fairly, the meaning of my author ; secondly, to examine his opinions, and consider whether they are true or false ; if false, then, thirdly, to present the public with what I consider to be truth,

We have, already, I think, discovered Mr. S.'s ideas of the greatest quantity of happiness. It is the greatest glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom. And Mr. S. affirms that sin and misery are the necessary means of producing this greatest glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom.

That we may have his whole system in one view, we will now endeavor to obtain Mr. S.'s ideas of the divine benevolence.

Mr. S. says, p. 109, " One of three things must certainly be true. Either 1st. That God is not a benevolent being.—Or 2dly. God hath not been able to prevent misery.—Or 3dly. Infinite benevolence is consistent with the existence of misery, and this is doubtless the truth. 2. Benevolence is consistent with immediately appointing and producing misery."

In p. 110, he says, " It appears that the following things are true concerning benevolence : First, That it is a love of the greatest quantity of happiness. Secondly, that it is consistent with the existence of misery, and with being the instrument of executing it. Thirdly, that it has regard to the greatest quantity

7

tity of happiness in society, and not to the happiness of every individual. Benevolence, thus defined, is that goodness or holiness, which directs the supreme God in creating, governing, and rewarding."

Mr. S. still farther illustrating his definition of divine benevolence, observes, p. 110. "The good of the whole or the greatest happiness of intellectual being, is the object of benevolence." Again, p. 111. "The happiness of every individual, and the greatest happiness of the whole, are considerations entirely separate; and the benevolence of God will choose the latter. As regard to the happiness of the whole, is the very thing which distinguishes benevolence from selfishness. It is the important criterion of distinction, and the whole which makes the difference between holiness and unholiness. It appears therefore that those, who attempt to reconcile the present misery of individuals with the goodness of God, by saying, he will make it the means of increasing their future happiness, so as to compensate for present suffering, have entirely departed from the nature of benevolence, and are judging of the dispensations of God, on the principles of selfishness. A benevolence limited by the law of individual happiness, is so far from the true benevolence of God, and of holy creatures, and from making all creatures blessed in its operation: that it is not holiness, neither can it ever give perfect happiness to any mind. There is no middle way between selfishness and a supreme regard to the good and glory of God and his kingdom."

We

—We have now, perhaps, made quotations enough for the present purpose ; and may proceed to collect and present, in one view, our author's ideas, both of the greatest possible quantity of happiness ; and of the divine benevolence. The greatest possible quantity of happiness, is the greatest public or general good ; or the greatest good of the whole ; or the greatest glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom.—This greatest glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom, consists with the eternal misery of individuals—are promoted by this misery—yea, sin and misery are the necessary means of producing the greatest glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom !! —The divine benevolence consists in loving the greatest possible quantity of happiness ; or in maintaining a supreme and inviolable attachment to his own greatest glory and blessedness, and to the greatest glory and blessedness of his holy intelligent kingdom ; or in loving, and taking supreme delight in that glory and that blessedness, which are not promoted only, but necessarily produced, by sin and misery !!!

The picture is shocking ! —It is dreadful !! I truly pity every reader, who is not absolutely divested of every spark of piety and humanity. The feelings of every pious and humane soul must be intolerably wounded by such a representation of the ever glorious God ; the Father and the Friend of all his creatures. The grossest and most corrupt falshood must
lie

lie at the foundation of such a system as this. And it is very unfortunate for Mr. S., since he hath, with considerable parade and ostentation, stepped forth as a champion for the truth, in this day of general decay of religion, and corruption of opinion, that the foundation principles of his scheme of truth, should appear so grossly and palpably false and corrupt.

To undertake a formal refutation of Mr. S.'s opinions of the greatest possible happiness, and of the divine benevolence, would be an unpardonable imposition on the intellectual abilities of the lowest class of my readers.

If I were to ask an American child, of ten years of age, and of half common sense, whether the greatest domestic happiness consisted, in the happiness of a part of the family, and the sin and misery of the rest; or in the united happiness of the whole family, he would readily, and without the least premeditation answer, that the supreme happiness of a family consisted in the aggregate of the happiness of each individual.

And, if I were still to proceed with this child, and to ask him which father were possessed of the truest benevolence, he who loved to contemplate the happiness of a part of his children joined with the sin and misery of the rest? or he who cordially loved all his children, dealt kindly by them all, and endeavoured to promote the happiness of all? he would as promptly answer, as before, the latter; the

the latter is the truly benevolent father. This is the native voice of the human heart ;—it is the voice of reason ;— it is the voice of common and unlettered sense.

I am very loth, in a candid, though critical, examination, to say hard things. Mr. S. is a gentleman of good natural and acquired abilities. But I cannot think he reasons so accurately and consequentially now, as he did twenty years ago. Instead of a formal refutation of the fundamental principles and opinions in Mr. S.'s system, I will beg leave to present him, and my fellow-citizens, with some few considerations on the supreme good of intelligent beings, and the divine benevolence.

The period in eternity was, if I may be allowed such an expression, when there was, a solitary God. No being in the universe but he. No creature existed. What then did the greatest glory and blessedness of God consist in ? Was He not as glorious and as blessed then, as He hath ever been since, or as He ever will be ? There was no sin, no misery then. Will Mr. S. say, God was not so glorious, nor so happy, then, as he hath been since the introduction of sin and misery into the system ? I think he must say this, to be consistent ; for he hath affirmed, that sin and misery are the necessary means of producing the greatest glory and blessedness of God. An unfortunate, and unfounded idea !

Did not virtue, holiness, and self-enjoyment, compose the glory and blessedness of God, in the days

days of eternity, and before creatures existed ? Or must we suppose that God derived a part of his glory and blessedness, even from old eternity, from the prospect which he then entertained of the abounding of moral and natural evil, in a thousand possible intellectual worlds ?

When no being existed but God, what was divine benevolence ? Was it a supreme affection to holiness, and to happiness as founded upon it ? or did he look forward to a thousand worlds which he designed to make, and, beholding his glory and blessedness advancing from the sins and miseries of millions, take supreme delight in the prospect ? According to the hypothesis Mr. S. hath advanced, both the glory and blessedness of God were imperfect before the introduction of sin and misery ; and consequently, his benevolence was but a faint resemblance of what it hath been since. So long ago as the days of Job, it was a current opinion among wise men, that the virtues and vices of mankind neither added any thing to, nor diminished any thing from, the divine Being. Elihu, in Job, says, “ If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him ? or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him ? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him ? or what receiveth he of thine hand ? ”—It is quite a new discovery, that the vices of mankind, and their misery consequent thereon, enhance the glory and blessedness of God : and that a system of intelligent creatures, partly virtuous and happy, and partly vicious and miserable,

miserable, is a more entertaining prospect to the Creator, and a greater object of his benevolence, than a system wholly virtuous and happy.

If sin and misery are the necessary means of producing the greatest glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom ; I ask, whether the glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom, would not be much greater than they now are, if the whole human race were vicious and miserable ? If vice and misery necessarily produce the glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom, the greater the vice and misery, the more glory and blessedness must be produced ; as the greater power in the cause, especially if it be a necessary cause, must certainly produce the greater effect. Again, if sin and misery be the necessary cause of the glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom, and the glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom, be the object of the supreme benevolence of God ; I ask, whether sin and misery are the object, or a part of the object, of divine benevolence ? As God loves his own glory and blessedness, and sin and misery are the necessary cause of them, I see not why the inference is not legitimate, that sin and misery are the object of the divine benevolence.

Thus an attempt to repair an old, crazy, erroneous system, hath involved a great and good man in a labyrinth of error and absurdity. As it often happens to him who undertakes to rectify and repair a defective

defective tattering frame, that he is caught under its ruins.

Indeed, the position, that God hath any respect, love, or benevolence to the general good of the universe, that, in the smallest degree, opposes his most cordial regard to the virtue and happiness of any individual among his intelligent creatures, is absolutely false ; and vain and fruitless will be the attempt of any man to support it. It will forever prove a forlorn hope to every one who shall try the experiment. That God hath a most kind and tender regard to the virtue and happiness, the temporal and eternal good, of all the individuals of Adam's race, is a most sacred and solemn truth ; which at once reflects the highest glory on God, and is matter of divine encouragement to man.

That there is, under the divine government, a public, general good, that is opposed to the real good of any individual, is a great and capital error in Mr. S.'s system. This error hath led him astray, and involved him in many gross absurdities. The virtue and happiness of his rational creatures form that public, or general good, which God supremely regards. And, as the the virtue and happiness of one, of a thousand, or of a whole system of intelligent creatures, is not inconsistent with the virtue and happiness of any other individual, or number of individuals, or of any other system of intelligent creatures ; so the divine benevolence to one, to a thousand, or to a whole system, is, by no means, inconsistent with the divine benevolence

lence to any other individual, or number of individuals, or to any other system of intelligent creatures.

The universe is not so large as to exhaust the divine benevolence. God loves all the worlds, and all the creatures, he hath made ; and if he had made as many more, he would have loved them all.

Mr. S.'s idea of the divine benevolence is not only contrary to reason, to common sense, to the common feelings of the human heart, and reducible to the grossest absurdity ; but most directly contrary to the Scripture representation of the love of God to his creatures.

I will presently show what is the Scripture representation of the divine benevolence ; after I have made a few observations on Mr. S.'s idea of selfishness, or partial benevolence.

From the quotations I have already made, we may form the following statement of Mr. S's. idea on this subject.

That, to think that the happiness of individuals composes the happiness of the whole ;—or that the greatest happiness of the whole, and the happiness of the individuals which compose that whole, are the same ; is selfishness.

That, to attempt the comfort and consolation of suffering individuals in this life, by telling them that God will reward them in the world to come, and richly compensate them in heaven, for their sufferings on earth ; proceeds from a selfish principle, and not from a view to the general good.

I suppose

Suppose a society consists of one hundred individuals. The happiness of the hundred individuals does not make up the happiness of the whole. The supreme happiness of the whole hundred, may consist well with the extreme misery of fifty. And it is a glorious imitation of divine benevolence, to take a supreme pleasure in the misery of fifty, if we can only see the other fifty happy.

The subject, I acknowledge, is serious ; but Mr. S.'s metaphysics bring to my mind a prayer once made by a good old farmer ; and, since the prayer was made in the very spirit of that benevolence which Mr. S. so ardently pleads for, I must recite it.

“ The Lord bless me, and my wife, my son John, and his wife ; we four and no more.”

The candid reader will forgive me the introduction of this prayer, when I solemnly declare to him, that I have not the least disposition to render Mr. S. ridiculous, or to treat the sacred subject with indecency. The sole object I had in view, in the introduction of this prayer was, that I might present to the world Mr. S.'s system in its true light, which I suppose this prayer does.

On Mr. S.'s plan, the good honest husbandman was perfectly right. That every family, or every individual, in his neighborhood, or town, should be blessed, was not, at all, necessary to the happiness of the whole neighborhood, or town. And I cannot see, on Mr. S.'s scheme of benevolence, that the good
farmer's

farmer's philanthropy was a whit too contracted.

In whatever light we view Mr. S.'s scheme of the public, or general good ; the glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom ; the greatest possible happiness, &c. we shall find it essentially defective. And his idea of divine benevolence, which originates directly in his scheme of the greatest possible happiness, is as defective.

If the system of eternal misery cannot be founded on better principles than these, it must and will fall to the ground. I should certainly consider my son who is not ten years old, as verily guilty, and worthy of correction, if he could not substantially refute such a scheme of eternal misery.

Indeed, the whole scheme of the greatest possible happiness, and of the divine benevolence, as brought into view by Mr. S., is a mere systematic whim, a phantasma of a disordered imagination, first introduced into the Christian Church, in the 5th century, by the bishop of Rome, in company with the doctrines of original sin, partial election, irresistible grace, and others of equal truth. And, from Rome, through Germany and Great Britain, this scheme of eternal misery came into Connecticut, where it hath been for almost two centuries ; and, by many in that State, is still held as a darling tenet, however slender and rotten be its foundation.

I will now endeavor to bring into view two
schemes

schemes of divine providence, in the creation and government of men, and fairly to represent them both, conducting each through the various ages of this world, up to those grand periods, when, as it is supposed, they will respectively close in the result of the divine mediatorial plan.

Though one of these schemes is as much older than the other, as truth is older than error, I shall not consult seniority in the order in which I shall place them.

In the ages of eternity, it seemed good to him who alone inhabits eternity, to create a universe, and to people it, in part, with rational creatures; to form this planetary system, and to plant man upon the earth.

He clearly saw the defectibility of such a creature;—that he would sin, and fall from his primeval state; and that, with sin, sickness, and pain, and sorrow and death, with an infinite train of natural evils, would enter the system. Though God, perhaps, considered his power sufficient to form an indefectible creature, he chose to make man. He considered that some of his rational creatures would maintain their integrity, and preserve their innocent state. That He could, consistently with a divine character, and the rectitude of his government, enter on a mediatorial plan, that would eventually save a part of the human kind. He considered also that, with those intelligent creatures who should keep their first estate, and that part of mankind, which the mediatorial scheme would save, He could be far more glorious

glorious and blessed, and his holy intelligent kingdom far more happy, than if He could, and should, save every individual of the human race. And, as He saw, that not the virtue and happiness of the whole race of Adam, but the sin and misery of a great part of them, would be the necessary means of producing the greatest glory and blessedness to himself, and the greatest possible quantity of happiness to His holy intelligent kingdom; He determined and ordained that man should be created, with this express design, that some of Adam's race should be restored to virtue and happiness, by the mediatorial scheme, and that the rest should endure an eternity of sin and misery.

He also determined that all things should be so calculated and conducted, both in his providential and mediatorial schemes of government of the world, as that some part of mankind should be eventually restored to virtue and happiness, and the rest eventually be left to spend a dreary eternity in sinning and suffering.

God also beheld, with divine benevolence and complacency, this mixed and checkered system of moral beings; Himself, supremely holy, blessed, and happy, amidst a universe of rational immortals, partly virtuous and happy, and partly sinful and miserable.

He considered this moral disposition of beings and things, as absolutely the best; He loves it accordingly, with supreme affection, and this is his divine benevolence.

benevolence. This is one scheme of creation, and of providential and mediatorial government, of man.

In the other scheme I shall make but very little variation, till I come to the commencement of the mediatorial plan.

The eternal Father, in the days of eternity, having determined to create the defectible creature man; and, looking, with divine pity and compassion, both on the sins and miseries of the fallen race, determined to introduce into his providential government of mankind a mediatorial plan, the result of which should be the restoration of all the sons and daughters of Adam to virtue, holiness and happiness.

He saw, with infinite delight, the bruised serpent's head, and all things in heaven, earth, and sea, paying voluntary and cheerful homage to his adored Son, whom he had set, as king, on his holy hill of Zion.

He, the indulgent Father of creation, when He raised his beloved Son on the mediatorial throne, delivered the sceptre into his hand, and with aspect mild and full of mercy, gave him a divine command never to return it, nor redeliver the kingdom, till the last enemy in the moral system, death, should be destroyed.

God determined to order and conduct every thing, by his divine Son, in the kingdoms of nature, providence, and grace, for the best interests of Zion and her king. And he saw, in glorious prospect, a numerous race of guilty immortals, redeemed, re-

D

stored,

stored, saved, made holy and happy ; all, all, not an individual lost, all surrounding his eternal throne, all singing and shouting forth the riches of redeeming love, in songs of joy and praise, to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever.

This restored, virtuous, and happy universe, God beheld, considered it as his greatest declarative glory and blessedness, loved it with supreme affection ; and this is his divine benevolence.

I have now, I think, shown the falsehood and absurdity of the fundamental principles of Mr. S.'s scheme. I have also presented my readers with two schemes of creation, and of divine providential and mediatorial government. I profess to be an examiner, not of Mr. S.'s piece only, but after truth ; and shall, therefore, not quit the subject, till I shall have farther considered the two schemes above exhibited, and endeavored to find which of them is countenanced by reason and scripture ; since they cannot both be true. But as I have begun to examine Mr. S.'s 2d. part, I must proceed a little farther with this.

We will examine further the subject of benevolence.

We have seen that Mr. S.'s idea of benevolence is false and unfounded. As one error leads on to another, and that again to another ; we may expect to find more errors and absurdities, in his application of his corrupt idea of benevolence. He says in

p. 111,

p. 111, "A regard to the happiness of the whole, is the very thing which distinguishes benevolence from selfishness." On the same page, he says, "It appears therefore that those, who attempt to reconcile the present misery of individuals with the goodness of God, by saying, he will make it the means of increasing their future happiness, so as to compensate for present sufferings; have entirely departed from the nature of benevolence, and are judging of the dispensations of God, on the principles of selfishness." Let us now examine these two passages.

In one we are taught, that a regard to the happiness of the whole is true benevolence. In the other, that to regard the happiness of any one individual, though it be the happiness of one's self, is contrary to true benevolence.

In this way Mr. S. hath made void one principal command of the divine law; to love our neighbor. To love our neighbor, is to wish him happy, and to take pleasure in his happiness. But this we may not do; because we may not regard the happiness of any individual. God is an individual. His happiness, though great, is but the happiness of an individual, and not the happiness of the whole.

I see not, according to Mr. S.'s idea of benevolence, that we are permitted to love God. I will try to compose the muscles of my face, so as to ask Mr. S. what his *whole* consists of? and whether it be composed of individuals? If of individuals; whether

laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day."

Common sense dictates that St. Paul, when he uttered what I have just recited, had a respect to his own individual happiness in heaven. If so, he must be pronounced to have been a very selfish man, and to have judged of the dispensations of God on the principles of selfishness.

Again, Mr. S. says, p. 112, "Though the christian cannot promise himself any personal benefit from what he endures, except it be that of thinking God is glorified; his confidence that infinite wisdom will make all events redound to the divine honor and happiness, and the general good, excites his benevolent resignation; and he rejoices that God reigns, because he will glorify himself and make a universe of the greatest blessedness."

Here is something so contrary to the scriptures, and to the experience and hopes of good men, in all past ages of the world, that one is almost tempted to think that it was written merely to support an hypothesis. Certainly a man must be extremely pressed, or he never would call for aid so contrary to reason, to human experience, and to the voice of divine revelation.

Mr. S. says that "the christian cannot promise himself any personal benefit from what he endures, except it be that of thinking God is glorified."—David says, "it is good for me that I have been afflicted: that *I might keep thy statutes.*" Was it not a personal

personal benefit to David, to be taught obedience to divine commands?

Of the Jewish church it is said, "By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged: and this is all the fruit, to take away his sin." Isa. xxvii. 9. Was it no benefit to Jacob, that his iniquities were purged, and his sin taken away, by what he suffered?

Our blessed Saviour says to his disciples, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven." Matt. v. 11, 12. Christ did extremely wrong, if Mr. S. is right, to tell his disciples of a reward of their sufferings on earth, which they should receive in heaven. "Whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, shall find it," Matt. xvi. 25. Will it be no personal benefit to a christian, to find immortal life, in consequence of losing a mortal one for Christ?

St. Paul was of a very different opinion from that of Mr. S., when he said, "If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Rom. viii. 17, 18.

The author of the epistle to the Hebrews, after he had presented them with a long catalogue of ancient worthies, who, through faith and patience, were then inheriting the promises; proceeds to exhort them:

them: "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Heb. xii. 1, 2. "It appears that a glorious exaltation in heaven was to be our Saviour's reward for suffering on the cross, from Philip. ii. 8, 9. "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name."—Here we have Jesus himself, the most benevolent being that ever appeared on the theatre of the world, as animated by the prospect of a great *personal reward* in heaven, to endure the most cruel sufferings, and the most ignominious death on the cross.

We have also one of his disciples, an apostle, exhorting christians to keep the great author of their salvation in constant view, and to imitate his example, by patient suffering in prospect of the reward in heaven.

—And yet, by Mr. S.'s scheme of benevolence, Jesus Christ is reduced down to a being who hath been guilty of inglorious selfishness; and one who hath
judged

judged of the dispensations of God on selfish principles!!!

The author to the Hebrews also must be classed with his Master, Jesus Christ, and considered as a selfish, ignoble being!!

No christian divine, I am persuaded, ever wrote any thing before, on a serious and important subject; so contrary to reason, so abhorrent from common sense, and so easily reducible to absurdity, and even to blasphemy.

Yet, after all, my heart feels disposed to make some apology for my brother. Poor human nature! What fast hold does prejudice take of the human mind! How hard is it to divest ourselves of it! Great talents, shining accomplishments, and the most useful qualities of the mind, are often sacrificed before the shrine of prejudice. My brother, no doubt, sat out with a pious heart, and with a real design to subserve the cause of truth, of Zion, and of God. But, alas! alas! how hath he failed! It appears that he really considers those he calls Universalists to be in a great error, to have corrupted the truth, and injured the morals of the people. And it is very evident that he took up his pen with a resolution to refute these errorists.

One of two things, I think, may be considered as certain, with regard to Mr. S. either he hath never thoroughly studied his subject, or a peculiar fondness for a favorite hypothesis hath injured his intellectual

E

powers.

powers. A man of Mr. S's. abilities, who had become a perfect master of his subject, and was tolerably free of prejudice, could not have written in such a manner.

This shews us the importance of prayer to God, the great author of our beings, and father of our spirits, that he would aid us in all our moral researches, and lead and guide us into all truth, and preserve us from falling into any dangerous errors, or delusions.

There is something farther, in what was last quoted from Mr. S. that appears to be very incautiously written, and conveys an idea that cannot be admitted, and which Mr. S. himself, in a considerate moment, will not admit. It is as follows: when speaking of the christian who is enduring affliction and suffering here on earth, he says, "his confidence that infinite wisdom will make all events redound to the divine honor and *happiness*, and the general good, excites his benevolent resignation." Are we to suppose that the divine happiness receives any addition or increase from the sufferings of mortal men? We have ever been taught that God is absolutely and infinitely perfect. If so, his happiness cannot be increased or diminished.

The prophet, speaking of God's treatment of Israel, and his disposition towards them when in affliction, says, "I will mention the loving kindness of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all

all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness towards the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them, according to the mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving kindneses. For he said, surely, they are my people, children that will not lie : so he was their saviour. *In all their affliction he was afflicted ;* and the angel of his presence saved them."

Does what is here said of the divine sensibility, on beholding the afflictions of Israel, infer that the happiness of God was increased by the afflictions of that people ? Even the causing sinful rebellious people to suffer the due reward of their wickedness, is denominated by the prophet, God's *strange work*. "For the Lord shall rise up as in mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, *his strange work* ; and bring to pass his act, *his strange act*." Isa. xxviii. 21. For the comfort and consolation of the afflicted, the prophet holds the following language, "For the Lord will not cast off forever. But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. *For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieves the children of men.*" Sam. iii. 31, 32, 33. The apostle, entertaining the same idea with the prophet, of the afflictions of men, says, "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, *if need be*, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations." 1. Pet. i. 6. From these scripture representations of God's manner of afflicting his church, or individuals,

als, are we led to suppose that the sufferings of mortals on earth, redound to the happiness of God ? rather, are we not most clearly taught that God hath ever had a uniform regard to the personal benefit of the afflicted, in those sufferings which his providence hath inflicted upon them ?

Though we should concede that Universalists may be mistaken, in some articles of their creed ; yet they will never be convinced, or refuted, whilst their adversaries oppose them with false and corrupt principles, borrowed from an old hackneyed system of faith, and gross contradictions and misconstructions of scripture. I have no doubt but that Universalists lie open to conviction, and are as willing as other men to receive light and truth. But it is a very preposterous method to endeavor to subvert their argument from the divine benevolence, by presenting them with such ideas of that benevolence, as are palpably false, and contradictory in themselves, and which infer the grossest reflections on the divine character.

We will go on still with our examination of Mr. S's. ideas of benevolence. Towards the bottom of p. 112, he begins his 5th observation thus, * A benevolence, limited by the law of individual happiness, is so far from the true benevolence of God, and of holy creatures, and from making all creatures blessed in its operation ; that it is not holiness, neither can it ever give perfect happiness to any mind. There is no middle way, between selfishness and a su-
premo

preme regard to the good and glory of God and his kingdom. The heart must have an object of its supreme regard. If self be this object there is a necessary opposition to the public good; and all the treasures of divine government, will be approved or disapproved by this rule, am I benefited, or not? Selfishness will look with a jealous and an afflicted eye on the emolument of every other being, that cannot be made subservient to its own purposes. The human heart wishes that every thing may conspire to the advancement of that interest, which it prefers to all others. A selfish creature wishes that every thing may conspire to the advancement of self, and puts himself in the place of God and the universe; and he must either be unhappy, or the divine government must bow to his individual interests." We now have a long quotation before us. Let us candidly and fairly, though critically, examine it.

A benevolence, limited by the law of individual happiness, is selfishness. All the measures of divine government will be approved, or disapproved, by this rule, am I benefited, or not? A selfish eye looks, with jealousy and affliction, on the emolument of every other being. A selfish creature wishes that every thing may conspire to the advancement of self. A selfish soul is unhappy, if all the measures of the divine government do not bow to his individual interests. Thus I have truly and fairly stated Mr. S's idea of selfishness.

Will

Will it not be conceived by every candid and consistent mind, that benevolence ought to be so defined as to form a perfect contrast to selfishness? Benevolence, then, tenders the happiness of every individual in the universe, that is capable of it. Benevolence will highly approve of all those measures of the divine government, which are calculated to subserve the real interest and happiness of all the members of that government. A benevolent eye will look, with the most cordial pleasure and satisfaction, on the emolument of every other being. A benevolent creature wishes that every thing may conspire to the advancement of the pleasure and happiness of all others, as well as of itself. The benevolent soul feels itself, in a great measure unhappy, whilst, under the excellent measures of the divine government, all its fellow creatures are not persuaded to be virtuous and happy.

I appeal, not only to the reason and common sense of my readers, but to their hearts, whether I have not stated the idea of benevolence in perfect contrast with Mr. S's. idea of selfishness, and in such manner as to meet their entire approbation. Yes, my christian readers, I ask your hearts, whether they do not approve of the picture of benevolence which I have set before them.

But you know that this is far from being Mr. S's. idea of benevolence. If it really were his idea, we should have no controversy with him. His benevolence, instead of grasping the intelligent universe in
the

the arms of its tenderest affection, is a regard to an airy phantom, a mere systematic figment, called the *public good*, or *greatest quantity of happiness*, even that *public good*, or *greatest quantity of happiness*, which is necessarily produced by the sin and misery of a great part of the human race ! !

Turn back, my kind readers, a few pages, and you may refresh your memories with Mr. S's. fundamental ideas of benevolence. There you will find that I here represent them truly. What, but a fond attachment to a hypothesis, could prevent Mr. S. from seeing the inconsistencies which he hath made ? Selfishness, he says, is a regard to one's own individual happiness, without respect to the happiness of others. Benevolence, he says, is a regard to God's holy intelligent kingdom, without any respect to the virtue and happiness of numberless millions of sinful and miserable beings. In a society of a thousand members, what is the difference between that benevolence which is limited to one, and that which is extended to five, or to fifty, or to five hundred, if it still fall short of grasping the whole ? They are both partial. One, indeed, includes a few more within the arms of love ; but leaves a great part of the society in misery.

Again, our author proceeds, " p. 114. According to the above explanation, the infinite benevolence of God is no proof of universal salvation ; for if the just and eternal misery of some, be a *necessary means of the greatest happiness*, it will doubtless be preferred

in his government, by a holy God. Benevolence applied to the divine character, in the loose sense that many use the word, means the same as that all creatures will be made happy. In this sense of the word, it will be denied that God is a benevolent being; and thus using it, is only taking that as granted, which is the real matter of dispute. This loose sense of the word will be very agreeable to sinful minds, and hath a fatal tendency to fix them in the security of death." Here the matter is brought plainly out, and we see what Mr. S. hath been laboring after all this time, even to fit up such an explanation of divine benevolence as would not countenance universal salvation. And he is perfectly right, when he says that, "according to the above explanation, the infinite benevolence of God is no proof of universal salvation." Well might he say this, since by the above explanation, divine benevolence is the supreme love which God hath for that intellectual, moral system, in which sin and misery have a great and eternal share. Lest we should forget that sin and misery are necessary to produce the greatest good of that moral system, which is the object of the infinite benevolence of God, Mr. S. hath taken special care to repeat the idea, and to renew the impression upon the minds of his readers.

I cannot but blame Mr. S. very much, for several things which I find in this last quotation from his book. First, I blame him much for repeating the assertion, that sin and misery are necessary means of producing

producing the greatest good in that moral system, which is the object of the divine benevolence, without once attempting to prove its truth. An assertion, which he makes to contain a fundamental principle in his scheme, certainly ought to have been supported by the clearest and most indubitable evidence. Instead of this, he hath not so much as attempted to prove it.

Secondly, I blame Mr. S. for charging it as a crime in others, that they assume as a granted position that which is a main subject in controversy. He says that, "benevolence applied to the divine character, in the loose sense that many use the word, means the same as that all creatures will be made happy. In this sense of the word," he says, "it will be denied that God is a benevolent being; and thus using it, is only taking that as granted, which is the real matter of dispute." If to use the word benevolence in such a sense, as to favor universal salvation, when universal salvation is the subject of dispute, be unfair, as it is taking for granted the thing to be proved: I will ask Mr. S. what shall be said of the man, who uses the word benevolence in such a sense, as to favor partial damnation, when partial damnation is his own professed subject of dispute?

Mr. S.'s positions concerning the divine benevolence are these. It is God's love of the greatest possible quantity of happiness. And this greatest possible quantity of happiness is produced, *necessarily*, by a great quantity of eternal sin and misery. And yet Mr. S. is the very man, who reflects on

the Universalists, as unfair disputants, when they use the word benevolence in that loose sense which, he says, means that all creatures shall be made happy ! ! Thus Mr. S. hath taken care, first, so to explain the word benevolence, as to make it infer the eternal sin and misery of a great part of the human race, and then, to enter a caveat against any such exposition of the word, as will, in the least degree, favor the extirpation of sin and misery out of the universe, because this would be taking for granted the subject of dispute. What, kind reader, shall we do in this dilemma ? If we interpret the word benevolence, so as to favor the destruction of sin and misery, we shall be unfair disputants. And, if we tamely indulge Mr. S. in his explanation of this word benevolence, we shall be eternally plagued, I fear, with sin and misery in the world.

Further, Mr. S. hath forewarned us what to expect, if we presume to interpret the word benevolence in that loose sense, which favors the destruction of sin and misery, viz. that it will be denied that God is a benevolent being. So that we see that Mr. S. hath taken every precaution to keep sin and misery in the world.

If we say that God loves the children of Adam, esteems, and treats them all with impartial affection ; desires the virtue, holiness, and happiness of them all ; and, when he contemplates a world of intelligent creatures, redeemed, restored, and saved, by his own gracious mediatorial scheme, he loves it,
he

he beholds this happy, exulting, enraptured world of intelligent creatures with divine pleasure; and this is his benevolence: we may expect soon to hear it denied that God is a benevolent being.

Whereas, if we say that God delights in the eternal sin and misery of a great part of Adam's race, as the necessary means of producing the greatest good the greatest possible quantity of happiness, even the glory and blessedness of God and of his holy intelligent kingdom; and that he looks, with supreme pleasure, on this mixed state of his moral world; and this is his benevolence: O then, then God is a benevolent being.

This last, my kind reader, is the only true representation of the Father of mercies, and God of all grace! Does your reason, your common sense, or your heart, consent? Can you persuade your mind to believe that this is a just representation of your Creator, and of divine benevolence?

The last sentence of my last quotation from Mr. S. viz. "This loose sense of the word will be very agreeable to sinful minds, and hath a fatal tendency to fix them in the security of death," I shall leave to be considered, hereafter, as an objection against that scheme of creation, and divine moral government of men, which we shall more fully examine.

To proceed a little farther with Mr. S's. idea of benevolence; he says, p. 115, "Every good mind wishes the greatest possible happiness in the universe of being. He wishes the greatest possible number of
of

of individuals to be made happy, that can be with the greatest happiness in the whole; and that each of these individuals should be the happiest possible. If God had made a revelation concerning any one or number of persons, that their salvation would be inconsistent with his plan of benevolent government; and that their being made happy would necessarily alter the scheme of social existence, in such a manner, that the universe would lose more than they would gain; in such a case, it is not seen that benevolence could wish their salvation, at the expense of a greater good. Benevolence never can wish a diminution of real good in the universe, for this would be acting against an essential quality of its own nature, which is, a delight in good or happiness." My kind reader, are you weary of the constant repetition of such ideas of benevolence? or does your patience still hold out? I confess mine is clean gone. I blame Mr. S. for asserting, without proof, and continuing to repeat, and call into view, that disagreeable idea, that the eternal misery of some is a mean of happiness to the rest. God has been pleased to give us two revelations of himself, and of his moral government of men; one natural, our reason; the other supernatural, his holy word. We have a right to use both, in all our inquiries after moral and religious truth. We will now endeavor, once for all, by the use of natural revelation, to demonstrate, First, That eternal misery, as a punishment of temporary crimes, is absurd and impossible, in its own nature. Secondly,

If

If it were possible, that it is cruel injustice to inflict it. Thirdly, That it cannot be a mean of increasing but must, in the nature of things, imbitter and spoil the happiness of saints. ' If these things can be done in a manner satisfactory to the public, it is readily seen, that Mr. S.'s hypothesis of the greatest good, and of divine benevolence, are totally refuted; and that his whole scheme of divine moral government is subverted. That scheme of divine government, which I formerly stated, in company with that which Mr. S. hath adopted, I shall, hereafter, examine, and endeavor to establish.

First, Eternal misery, as a punishment of temporary crimes, is absurd and impossible in its own nature. Eternal punishment is an infinite punishment. Infinite punishment infers infinite guilt. Infinite guilt is the quality of the action of an infinite being. Man is the guilty being. Man is therefore an infinite being. Thus we must give up the idea of eternal misery, as a punishment inflicted on men for sins committed in this world, or admit that man is an infinite being.

Secondly, Would the nature of things admit it, eternal misery is cruelly unjust.

Man once slept in nonentity. The fiat of the Almighty called him into existence. At the moment, when God said, "Let us make man"; the whole series, and every accident, of man's future existence, were present to the divine view. Before man existed, he certainly was not guilty.

To

To call an innocent nonentity into being, to be eternally sinful and miserable, is to exert irresistible and almighty power to produce an infinite evil. I freely submit it to my reader, and the world, whether this be not an action of sovereign cruelty, and barbarous injustice.

Thirdly, The eternal misery of sinners would not increase, but embitter and spoil, the happiness of the saints. Heaven and hell will be eternally in prospect of each other according to the supposition. I call on the indulgent father, and on the delicately kind and tender mother, to speak the sentiments of their hearts. Are you willing to receive heavenly happiness at the expense of the eternal sin and misery of your dear children? Or, if in heaven, can you imagine it would increase your felicity, to look down into the hideous regions of eternal despair, and there to behold your children in devouring fire, never to be quenched, where their worm will never die? Parental, filial, and every social feeling, must be entirely eradicated from the human soul, by a transition from earth to heaven, or the miseries of hell, if they are to be eternal, will destroy the happiness of celestials.

The glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom, are necessarily produced by the eternal sin and misery of the wicked. If by the glory and blessedness of God be meant, the illustrious display of the divine character and perfections, the eternal sin and misery of the wicked, instead of producing,

producing, will lessen, obscure, and cast an eternal infamy and reproach upon the divine glory and blessedness. How is it possible that any man should be so infatuated, as to entertain the idea, that it would reflect glory on the divine character, to project a scheme of creation, and moral government, in such a manner, that a part of mankind could not be happy, but at the expense of the eternal sin and misery of all the rest.

Charity, the darling of heaven, which warms the breasts of angels, animates the soul of the filial God, and is the most charming grace that ever entered a human heart, must cease, together with faith and hope, or she will be an eternal torment to the saints. She is incessant, in her wishes, and prayers, and endeavours for the virtue and happiness of all men, whilst she dwells on earth. I beg to know what will be her employment in heaven. St. Paul seems to have been of opinion that charity would go to heaven. Was he mistaken, through his great fondness for that virtue? Or, if she goes to heaven, will she lose all that rendered her so amiable on earth, her ardent desire of the happiness of the human kind? If she retain this amiable quality in heaven, she will unavoidably mar and poison all the joys of the blessed, when she shall look on the sin and misery of the damned. Thus, unless we allow man to be an infinite being, eternal punishment of his temporary crime cannot be; it is absolutely impossible in the nature of things. If possible, we have seen it to be cruelly unjust,

unjust, and therefore it can never be ascribed to God, as a part of his plan of moral government. And as to the notion that both moral and physical evil must eternally exist, in order to produce the greatest possible quantity of happiness, it is so far from being true, that their eternal existence would be the mean of destroying both the glory of God, and the happiness of the virtuous.

I wish not to be guilty of too many repetitions, or of dwelling too long on this subject. Though, since the subject itself is of the greatest importance, and since Mr. S. makes constant use of his ideas of the greatest quantity of happiness, and of the divine benevolence, in his interpretations of scriptures, and answers to objections against his scheme, I am desirous to make the falsehood and absurdity of his assumed principles appear, in the clearest light, to every attentive reader. I call Mr. S.'s principles assumed, because he hath never proved them to be true. That the greatest good is necessarily produced by eternal sin and misery; and that the divine benevolence consists in loving this greatest good; are principles which are often asserted, but never once proved. Yet every reader sees that these two propositions are the fundamental principles of his whole scheme.

I will make one quotation more concerning the subject of benevolence. Mr. S. says, p. 115, "Benevolence doubtless wishes, concerning all men now living in the world, that they may be saved; if it be
the

the will of God, who is the guardian of the interests of the great whole."

I am not so much surprised at this sentence, as if we had heard nothing of the kind till now. It is, however, really surprising, and greatly to be lamented, that a christian divine, of fifty years of age, should voluntarily send such a sentence to the press. Here Mr. S. allows that human benevolence would wish the salvation of all men; if divine benevolence would permit. Great God! is it so? art thou unwilling, O thou Father of mercies, and God of all grace, that the benevolent wishes of the human heart, that all men should be saved, should be gratified? Is thy benevolence outdone and exceeded by poor sinful worms of the dust! Not so! we may not, we cannot, believe it!

That God is willing that all men should be saved, we shall see, hereafter, abundantly proved from the scriptures. At present, we shall attend to the dictates of reason only. We shall find reason perfectly sufficient to demonstrate the falsehood and absurdity contained in the above sentence.

A benevolent man would wish the salvation of all his fellow creatures, but God their maker will not! I ask, why God is unwilling that any man should be saved? Suppose God had made but one man. Will Mr. S. concede that God would be willing that that one man should be saved? Or will he imagine that it may possibly lessen the glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent angelic kingdom,

G

that

that this single human being should be happy ? If this one man's eternal happiness must be sacrificed ; I ask wherefore God made him ? He certainly was not made to be happy. Then God made him with express design to make him eternally miserable. Now I would ask Mr. S. whether God be really glorified in making a creature capable of eternal happiness, with express design to make him eternally miserable ? If so, I have one question more, whether it really is an illustrious display of the divine perfections, that God, by a sovereign, irresistible act of his will, should create an eternal evil ? Sin and misery are both evils ; and, if eternal, they are eternal evils. Yet God, by an irresistible act of his will, hath produced them both ; and this conduct of the divine being is the advancement of his glory. If so, there is nothing in the universe that is false or absurd.

Let us view this matter in a light a little different. Will Mr. S. allow that God hates sin ? If he answer, that he does hate it ; I say the following consequences are undeniable ; that God eternally hates that, which is the necessary mean of producing his own glory, and the greatest good of the intelligent universe. For, according to Mr. S. sin is a necessary mean of producing God's glory, and the greatest good. Again, it follows, that God eternally hates that which he will be eternally unable to prevent. For the scripture informs us that God cannot deny himself. His own glory he must and will maintain. And his own glory is produced by sin. God is therefore obliged

to endure that which his soul hates ;
 it in order that he may be glorified.
 The inference more undeniably follows,
 and is a very miserable being.

I say that God loves sin ; then the follow-
 ing are true. God is obliged to punish that
 eternal misery which his soul delights in ; and
 this is for the promotion of his own glory, and
 the greatest good of his intelligent universe. Again,
 if God love sin, then mankind are not guilty in com-
 mitting it ; unless they are guilty for doing that
 which God loves. Again, it follows, that God is
 obliged eternally to cause innocent creatures to suf-
 fer, for his own glory and the greatest good of his in-
 telligent universe. If these things are true, as they
 certainly are, if God loves sin ; it follows again, that
 God is a most miserable being.

So that, whether God loves, or hates sin, a train
 of consequences follow, upon Mr. S.'s hypothesis of
 the greatest good, and of the divine benevolence, un-
 speakably shocking to every pious and generous
 feeling of human nature. I cannot think that I need
 write any more, to convince every candid and intel-
 ligent reader, that Mr. S.'s ideas of divine benevo-
 lence are essentially defective, false and absurd ;
 and that his whole system of eternal sin and misery,
 since it is founded on these ideas, and such interpre-
 tations of scripture as they lead to, must inevitably
 fall to the ground.

I shall, hereafter, consider Mr. S.'s whole scheme
 of

of eternal sin and misery, and of divine benevolence, as refuted and exploded, and entirely gone out of the universe, and shall have no reference to it, more or less, except only, as occasion may offer in the progress of this work, I may make an observation now and then, illustrating the proof of the falsehood and corruption of the scheme.

So far as Mr. S. makes use of his scheme of divine benevolence, in any part of his work, to support any part of his system of eternal sin and misery, or to illustrate any passage of scripture, I shall consider his performance as so far defective, as the use and influence of his corrupt scheme of benevolence shall extend.

I view Mr. S.'s scheme of benevolence as so prodigiously corrupt, that it must shed an infectious and contaminating influence on every thing with which it comes in contact,

I shall now proceed to make some remarks on the practical use which Mr. S. makes of his theory of divine benevolence.

The first practical use which he makes of his theory of benevolence, is a very flagrant breach of christian charity. The passage is as follows, p. 117. "the observations, which have been made upon the nature of benevolence or holiness, shew us, why some, whose doctrinal belief is right, whose visible conversation is regular, and who live in a punctual attendance on gospel ordinances, may still be very unholy persons, and intirely unprepared for heaven."

heaven." I consider this as a plain insinuation, that all those persons, who do not adopt Mr. S.'s theory of benevolence, and bring their hearts to a compliance with it, are very unholy, and entirely unprepared for heaven. Whoever peruses this whole 4th. Sec. beginning on page 117, will instantly see that I truly and fairly represent Mr. S.'s ideas, in the quotation above. If so, what can be more unkind or uncharitable than Mr. S.'s insinuation? In the first place, the insinuation is unreasonable, and unfounded. Mr. S. has made a very great and important decision, with regard to the moral state of many of his fellow christians, without sufficient data. For I presume there are many of Mr. S.'s fellow christians who are very far from adopting his theory of benevolence or holiness. And has Mr. S. a right to determine that his brother's heart is defective, because he may think that his head is wrong? Even if he absolutely knew that his brother's religious theory were corrupt, he has no right to determine that his heart is corrupt also. God only knows how great a degree of theoretical corruption may consist with real moral goodness of heart. Mr. S. does not exercise the same candor and christian charity towards his brother, that he would wish to have exercised towards himself. I most certainly do not adopt Mr. S.'s notions of benevolence and holiness; and further, I think I have clearly demonstrated them to be false, corrupt, and replete with the grossest absurdities. Yet I do not consider myself at liberty to determine that his heart is corrupt, that he

is

fundamental principles in God's moral government of the rational universe, and in the nature of holiness or moral virtue. Here it becomes necessary that we should form accurate ideas of the nature of justice, as it exists in God, and is exercised in his government of the universe. To assist in this, I make the following remarks.

"1stly. Justice is but a branch, or exercise of his love, benevolence or goodness. God is love. His whole moral character is love, benevolence or goodness; and justice is always an exercise of that moral character, which is designated by these words.

"2dly. The object of benevolence or goodness; or the end to which it is directed, in all its exercises, is the public good. The object of justice and its exercises in God, and the sole end which he means to promote, is the general good. What we call the vindictive or punitive justice of God, has in all cases the public benefit for its ultimate end. We have no reason to suppose that any end, detached from the general good, is God's ultimate end in any thing that he does. For if we once admit this, it introduces into the divine government two opposing principles; public good, and individual or separate good. I call these opposing principles, because they are thus in their own nature. While individual or separate good is the object of supreme choice and love; the general good cannot be. And when the general good is the object of supreme choice; individual or separate good cannot be. This doth not militate
against

against individual happiness, because the greatest possible happiness of individuals, is when they give up their own private interests, and make the public interest their supreme and governing object in all their actions and wishes. Though God hath forbid his creatures making their own interest a supreme object, he hath so constructed their natures, that they are the most happy they can be, when they supremely love the public interest, happiness and glory. It is in this way, that infinite wisdom hath united the highest possible public good and the greatest individual or personal blessedness."

I have now quoted enough to enable us to comprehend Mr. S.'s whole plan of divine justice, upon which he attempts an answer to the objection which he states. We will apply ourselves to a critical and candid examination of this plan of justice, and consider how it answers the objection. In order to this, I will endeavor to bring Mr. S.'s ideas into a shorter compass.

The reader will here recollect Mr. S.'s definitions of the public good, and of the divine benevolence; and, whilst we are passing on, I will endeavor to keep them in view.

The public good is the *greatest glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom*. This greatest public good is *necessarily produced by sin and misery*. With this public good God is supremely delighted. This is his benevolence.

The justice, even the punitive justice, of God is an

H

exercise

exercise of his benevolence. Now, since justice, punitive justice, is an exercise of divine benevolence; and divine benevolence is a supreme regard to the public good; and the public good is the greatest glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom; and sin and misery are the necessary means of producing the greatest glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom; punitive justice requires that sin and misery should be eternal. So far Mr. S. is consistent with himself, in returning his answer to the objection. And had Mr. S. have stopped here, thrown down his pen and attempted no farther illucidation of the subject, he would have done wisely: but some illfated suggestion, in an unlucky moment, put it into his head, to write something with regard to the degree and duration of punishment. This too great diffuseness has ruined his whole scheme because it is all in direct contradiction to it. We will, notwithstanding, pay it some attention.

He says, speaking of the degree and duration of punishment, p. 125. "I may in this place mention some things to be considered, as evidential that eternal punishment is not greater than the general happiness requires, and consequently not greater than the demerits of sin.

1. The sinner's temper and practice are directly opposed to the glory and blessedness of God, and his intelligent kingdom." If it be true, that the sinner's temper and practice are in direct opposition

to

to the glory and blessedness of God, and his intelligent kingdom; and if God hath a supreme regard to his own glory and blessedness, and to the glory and blessedness of his intelligent kingdom; he certainly will destroy the sinner's temper and practice; or, in other words, he will certainly put an end to sin; which is the very thing that universalists believe God will finally do. To suppose that God will endure, in his rational universe, an eternal opposition to his own greatest glory and blessedness, and to the glory and blessedness of his holy intelligent kingdom, is to make him a very unwise, as well as malevolent, being. We should have been much better pleased, if Mr. S. had come voluntarily over to the side of truth and of the Universalists; but we will endeavor to make the most we can of his constrained homage paid to truth.

"2. The sinner's temper and practice is a violation of infinite obligation." If Mr. S. means *very great*, by *infinite*, it would be consistent enough for a Universalist to say, that the sinners temper and practice are a violation of a very great obligation; but it will not do for Mr. S. to say this, unless he will be patient, when gross contradictions are charged upon him. The exercise of the sinner's temper in wicked practice, is the very thing that produces the greatest glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom; how can the sinner then violate an infinite, or a very great obligation, by the exercise of his wicked temper? The sinner is commanded to do

all he does to the glory of God. And, according to Mr. S.'s express and repeated assertions, and indeed according to his theory of eternal sin and misery, the sinner, when exercising his wicked temper in committing sin, is doing that which produces the glory of God. Thus inconsistent and contradictory is error!

"3. The tendency of the sinner's temper and practice is to banish infinite blessedness from the universe, and to introduce infinite evil or wretchedness." What! is the tendency of the sinner's temper and practice, at once, a necessary mean of producing the blessedness of God, and of banishing infinite blessedness from the universe!! My brother, when I see you engaged in a cause that you appear, in a great measure, unacquainted with, and which you cannot support; and behold you involving yourself more and more in contradiction and absurdity; I pity you.

Thus, in answering an objection against eternal misery, which arose from the consideration of the divine wisdom and justice, we see Mr. S. pressed beyond measure, and obliged to assert things in direct contradiction to his own theory, and in favor of universal salvation. But, when the matter is duly considered, we have no reason to wonder at the difficulty Mr. S. found in reconciling eternal sin and suffering with the divine justice. It was a task too great for his abilities. And, if his abilities had been increased ever so much, after his first entrance on the work, it would not have altered the case in his favor,

for

for no abilities are sufficient, or ever will be, to reconcile eternal sin and misery, in the universe of God, with any part of the divine character. The truth is, no such task was ever assigned to man. God never intended that sin and misery should have an eternal existence in his intelligent system. When he saw best to admit them for a time, he solemnly determined their destruction, and made every necessary provision for it. This, my kind reader, we shall hereafter see to have been the plan of God, and that it was quite an unwelcome task which Mr. S. hath undertaken.

To suppose that God hath so constructed his intellectual moral system, as to render the general good inconsistent with the best good and highest interest of all the individuals, is an absurd and fatal error. This is doubtless a part of that scheme of faith which Mr. S. was taught in his early youth. And it is very evident, from his writing, that he hath never thought sufficiently yet, to think freely, and without the embarrassment of a system.

It can be of no service to proceed any farther with the objections which Mr. S. raises against his own scheme of eternal sin and misery. His corrupt system of the general good, and of the divine benevolence, affords him answers to all his objections. And the reader will find, on the most careful and candid perusal, that the objections, when of any weight, are no better answered than this against eternal misery, from the consideration of the divine justice.

I wish

I wish not, by any thing I have said, or may hereafter say, to cast any reproach on Mr. S.'s abilities, intellectual or moral. It is my real desire to treat him with candor and ingenuity, and as I should wish that he would treat me in a like case.

I think I have discovered many inconsistencies and absurdities in Mr. S.'s theory of the divine benevolence ; and several of them I have pointed out. At the same time, I impute all these inconsistencies and absurdities to the falsehood and corruption of Mr. S.'s general scheme, rather than to any want of ability in him. An angel's abilities are far too small to reconcile error with truth. When I first opened Mr. S.'s book, I was as perfectly satisfied as I am now, that he would fail in his attempt to reconcile the doctrine of eternal misery with the infinite benevolence of God.

I have now thoroughly perused his book ; I see he hath failed ; but I am not disappointed. The same attempt hath often been made before, and as often as made, it hath failed. We may say of the attempt to reconcile eternal misery with the divine character, as Solomon hath said of the lascivious woman, " She hath cast down many wounded : yea, many strong men have been slain by her."

Before I close this part, I beg leave to bring into view that scheme of creation, and of divine providential and mediatorial government, which I proposed to inquire into in the 2d. part. The reader will remember that this scheme was formerly stated, in
company

company with that which Mr. S. hath been pleased to adopt. I shall only repeat it as it there stands.

“The eternal Father, in the days of eternity, having determined to create the defensible creature man; and looking, with divine pity and compassion, both on the sins and miseries of the fallen race, resolved to introduce, into his providential government of mankind, a mediatorial plan, the result of which should be, the restoration of all the sons and daughters of Adam to virtue, holiness, and happiness. He saw, with infinite delight the bruised serpent's head, and all things in heaven, and earth, and sea, paying voluntary and cheerful homage to his adored Son, whom he had set, as king, on his holy hill of Zion.

He, the indulgent Father of creation, when He raised his beloved Son to the mediatorial throne, delivered the sceptre into his hand, and with aspect mild and full of mercy, gave him a divine command, never to return it, nor redeliver the kingdom, till the last enemy in the moral system, death, should be destroyed.

God determined to order and conduct every thing, by his divine Son, in the kingdoms of nature, providence, and grace, for the best interests of Zion and her king. And He saw, in glorious prospect, a numerous race of guilty immortals redeemed, restored, saved, made holy and happy; all, all, not an individual lost, all surrounding his eternal throne, all singing and shouting forth the riches of redeem-

ing

ing love, in songs of joy and praise, to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever.

This restored, virtuous, holy and happy universe, God beheld, considered it as his greatest declarative glory and blessedness, loved it with supreme affection ; and this is his divine benevolence."

Having proposed this as the scheme of creation, and of divine, providential and mediatorial government of men, I shall proceed directly to examine its establishment in the word of God.




PART SECOND.

An inquiry, whether it be not the benevolent and gracious plan of God, that all men shall, eventually, be virtuous and happy?

ALL parties agree that God hath created man ;—that he was a defeñible creature, in his original constitution ;—that he fell from his primeval state and became a sinner ;—that God pitied him, in his lapsed state, and provided a Mediator, a Savior. In these things, I may suppose, each denomination of christians readily concurs. The sole matter of difference, perhaps, will be the extent of the mediatorial design ; whether God really intended the holiness and happiness of all men, or of a part only. The plan of divine and mediatorial benevolence, as just stated above, includes the whole human race. And we can no other way obtain entire satisfaction in this matter, than by an examination of the sacred scriptures. Reason knows nothing of a mediatorial plan of God, but what he hath been graciously pleased to reveal. I shall seriously address myself to an examination of the holy scriptures, after I shall have premised a few plain rules of interpretation, by which I generally conduct my own inquiries after the meaning of scripture, and by

I

which,

which, it may be well, that the reader should examine my interpretations.

That sense of scripture, which, upon a first careful reading appears natural and easy, is generally the true meaning. If there be difficulty in the interpretation of a passage, in any particular writer, compare the dubious passage with others of the same writer, that appear more plain, and are on the same subject. This will generally succeed. If not, collate a number of passages on the same subject, from different writers, and from different parts of the scriptures. Always remembering that the Bible contains one consistent scheme, and that the sacred writers agree in their accounts of it. Sometimes it is useful to have recourse to the Hebrew and Greek text; or to revert to the customs, manners, habits, &c. of the people and places mentioned in the scriptures. By these rules, and in these ways, if we have honest hearts, we may find the true interpretation of scripture.

In this part, I shall take no other notice of the passages of scripture which Mr. S. hath adduced in proof of eternal sin and misery, than I shall take of any other passages of scripture; using those passages of his, which plainly prove the extensive nature of the mediatorial plan, as I do other scriptures. In the next part, I shall consider some passages Mr. S. hath used in support of the doctrine of eternal misery as objections against universal salvation.

The first we hear of a mediatorial plan of God, is
in

in the history Moses hath given us of the defection of Adam and Eve, and of the conversation which the divine Being vouchsafed to hold with them. It is Gen. iii. 15. "And I will put enmity between thee, and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed ; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Divines, and interpreters of all sects of christians, have agreed that, by the seed of the woman, is meant Jesus Christ the Redeemer, who was born of a woman. That some individual was intended, and not the whole race of men, is much favored by the use of the singular personal pronoun. This admitted, what appears the most natural and easy sense of the passage ?

"He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Not that Christ should put an end to the serpent's existence. This would have been no matter of comfort to Adam and Eve. The serpent had seduced them. They had now lost their innocence, and were, undoubtedly, sensible of some of the sad consequences of their defection, and wanted something to encourage their faith and hope in the divine mercy. To tell them that, in some future distant period, some one should arise who would destroy the serpent's being, would have presented them with no present ground to hope in the mercy of God. But to have acquainted Adam and Eve in their then present circumstances that a great friend and benefactor of mankind should arise, who should effectually counteract the design of the serpent,

serpent, open a way of access to divine mercy, and restore them and their children to the favor of God; this language would have administered the comfort and consolation which these grand parents of our race then wanted.

The history is short. We have reason to believe that much more passed between God and Adam than Moses has recorded. But not to enter into any conjectures concerning what God might have said to Adam and Eve; this text is transmitted to us, and we have a right to interpret it according to the best light we have. And if we interpret the words according to their easiest and most natural meaning, we must suppose that God intended to destroy the works, and not the existence, of the serpent. Sin and misery are the works of the Devil. These God designed to destroy. That God promised Adam that he would destroy *all* the works of the devil, and banish all sin and misery out of the world; is the grand subject of controversy.

The simile, made use of, the bruising the head of the serpent, would easily and naturally lead to the universal sense; whereas the limited and partial sense appears unnatural and constrained. To bruise the head of a serpent, is to kill him; and hath been the uniform method of killing serpents, from the days of Adam, to the present time.

The promise to Abraham, that in his seed "all the families of the earth should be blessed," Gen.

xii.

xii. 3. exceedingly favors the universal sense of Gen.
iii. 15.

By this seed of Abraham all interpreters agree that Christ was intended. Consider this as a promise of benefit to men through Christ, and it is difficult to find language more universal.

But we will go on to those passages of scripture that speak expressly of Christ's interposition, sufferings and death; and we may easily satisfy ourselves whether they speak of the design of Christ's sufferings and death in limited or universal language.

The xvii. chap. of John I have chosen to mention in this place for two reasons. One, that I consider it as a clear and plain demonstration that Christ intended the benefits of his mediation should so extend to all the world, as that the world should be saved by him. Another reason is, that Mr. S. hath chosen this text as a plain proof of partial election to salvation. And if we may be as successful in refuting Mr. S.'s scripture proof of eternal sin and misery, as we have been in refuting his proof from the nature of divine benevolence, we shall be quite willing to submit our examination to the decision of the impartial public.

As Mr. S. hath made a partial quotation from the above mentioned chapter only, I beg leave to recite and paraphrase the whole.

"These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee."

The

The foregoing things spake Jesus, and then, lifting up his eyes in a devotional manner, he said, O Father, the time of my sufferings and death draws nigh ; divinely assist and support thy Son, that he may pass through the scene that is before him, in such manner as to reflect honor on the religion which he hath preached, and glory on his character, as a divine ambassador.

“ As thou hast given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him ”

As thou hast given a commission to thy Son which extends to the whole human race ; that he might give eternal life to all included in that commission.

“ And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.”

And this is life eternal, that all flesh, the whole human race, should obtain the true knowledge of the one living and true God, through Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent for the purpose of communicating this knowledge.

“ I have glorified thee on the earth ; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.”

I have hitherto glorified thee, both in the matter and manner of those divine instructions which I have given, and have, as a divine instructor, finished the business which thou gavest me to do.

“ And now, O Father, glorify me with thine own self

self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

And now, O Father, I wait, only to terminate my life in the glorious cause in which I have engaged, and then, being approved of thee, in the high commission which I bear, to be admitted to the glory and blessedness which I enjoyed with thee before the world was made.

"I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have known thy word."

I have faithfully instructed, in the knowledge of thy name and character, the men whom thou didst select from the world, and give me as my peculiar attendants and companions: and they have profited by the instructions which I have given them.

"Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee."

These, my disciples, have received full conviction that my commission, authority, and the character I have assumed, are divine.

"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou hast sent me."

I have given such instructions to my family as I received from thee; and they have given credit to them, and have been fully convinced that my mission is divine.

"I

might give eternal life *to them* ? And, if our Saviour had not prayed for the world at all, would it not have been less favorable to the Universalists, than it now is, since he has expressly, and repeatedly prayed that the world may believe and know that the Father hath sent him ? To believe and know this, is to believe and know the very same thing, which, he tells his Father, that his immediate disciples believed and knew. Yea, it is to believe and know the self same thing, which Jesus himself, in this same chapter, expressly says is eternal life. V. 3. "And this is life eternal, that they might know *Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.*" To believe that God hath sent Jesus Christ into the world, is the very proposition which Jesus Christ himself wished that men might believe, John xi. 42.

"And I knew that thou hearest me always, but because of the people which stand by I said it, *that they may believe that thou hast sent me.*" John xiii. 19. "Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, *ye may believe that I am he.*" John xvi. 30. "Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee ; *by this we believe that thou comest forth from God.*" Thus we find demonstrated from Scripture, that, in the xvii. chap. of John, our Saviour repeatedly prayed that the world might believe that very sacred truth which his immediate disciples believed, and which he himself wished the people, who heard him preach and saw his miracles, might believe.

Mr.

Mr. S. recapitulates the evidence, as he supposes, there is in this prayer, of our Saviour against the salvation of all men, and makes his conclusions from it, in the following terms.

P. 20. "From this representation of our Saviour, it appears, that in the covenant of redemption which determined the number of those to be saved; some were given to Christ as his spiritual seed, and none of them shall be lost; and some were not given to him in this sense, and are called the world. He does not even intercede for the world, for they hate him and his people. They are never to be one in a spiritual sense with his Father and him; nor to be in the same place with Christ, nor see the glory which the Father hath given him; and of course they must be left to suffer the wages of sin, and be separated from the holy presence of God."

There are some things which Mr. S. hath affirmed in this passage, that are truly surprising. I wish the reader carefully to attend to the assertions which Mr. S. hath made. He affirms that, from this chapter it appears, that some were given to Christ as his spiritual seed, and that none of them shall be lost; and some were not given to him in this sense, and are called the world; that he does not even intercede for the world, for they hate him and his people. Now let us enquire who they were that were given to Christ, according to the account of this chapter; and in what sense they were given to him.

They were those to whom Christ had personally manifested

eral and indefinite terms ; is a demonstration that he never thought of a partial election to salvation.

Another passage of scripture, declarative of the universality of the salvation of the gospel, and consequently of the divine benevolence, is Luke, ii. 8—14, "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them ; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not ; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you : Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace ; good will towards men."

Now let system, and prejudicate opinions be laid entirely aside ; and let us, with minds free and unbiassed, look on this passage of scripture, in order to find its real meaning,

Jesus is born in Bethlehem of Judea. An angel appears to the shepherds, whilst tending their flocks ; at the same time a celestial and divine radiance illumined all the place. The shepherds are dismayed and astonished. The angel dispels their fear, and bids them be of good confidence ; and immediately
announces

announces the birth of Jesus, the Saviour; and declares his advent to be gospel, good tidings, *to all people*. At the annunciation of the angel, all heaven was moved, and a multitude of angelic natures instantly leave their bright abode, join the heavenly messenger, tune their golden harps, and enter on the glorious theme, "Glory to God in the highest, and *on earth peace, good will toward men.*"

If the advent of Jesus were to be salvation to a part of the people only; the angel was surely mistaken in his report to the shepherds; for he says, which shall be unto *all people*. Further, the divine glory, which shone around the angel and the shepherds, when the declaration of good tidings was made, which should be to *all people*, gave a sanction to the declaration. So that we have double, or treble, testimony from heaven, that the birth of Christ was designed for good tidings to *all people*; and, if so, for salvation to *all people*.

Another passage of scripture, most plainly denoting the universality of the effect of Christ's blood, and of the love of God, is John i. 29. "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

Could language be more general, than this John uses? *the sin of the world*. Do you not think, my kind reader, that St. John really supposed, that the effect of our Saviour's blood would be, to take away *all the sins of all men*? If he did not, he certainly

was

was inexcusable for using such universal language. He might very easily have adopted language which would have clearly expressed the partial effect of Christ's blood. He might have said, *Behold the Lamb of God who will take away the sins of a part of the world.*

Thus we have the four Evangelists, and the multitude of the heavenly host, that appeared to the shepherds of Judea; and, what is more, we have Jesus himself; all declaring, in plain, unfigured language, the universal salvation of the gospel.

It is not my design to multiply direct proofs of the universal benevolence of God; but only to adduce a few plain texts, which every honest, though unlettered, mind may understand, which speak directly to the purpose. Origin, Grotius, Whiston, Hallet, Chauncy, and many others, as great and good as these, have handled the subject largely, and considered an infinitude of passages of Scripture, both against the doctrine of eternal misery, and for the universal benevolence of God.

What I principally intended was, to examine Mr. S.'s piece, and to show the falsehood and absurdity of his principles; since, to find out what is false is one good step towards truth.

Rom. v. 6. "For when we were yet without strength, Christ died for *the ungodly*." If St. Paul had said "when we were without strength, Christ died *for us*;" meaning himself, and a select number of others, this text would not be in point, for univer-
sal

at benevolence ; but as the words now stand, the sense is clear and undeniably plain in favor of universal salvation. If there were any person, among the Jews, or the Gentiles, who were not ungodly, in St. Paul's sense, we cannot prove, from this text, that Christ died for him ; otherwise, Christ died for all men ; and, if he died for all men, all men will certainly be saved. Rom. v. 8. "But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." All mankind were in the same predicament, they were all sinners. If Christ died for sinners, he died for all sinners ; unless there be some express exception made, which does not appear to be the case.

1 Cor. xv. 22. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Here is a text whose language is plain, intelligible, and positive. And, were it not for creeds, confessions, catechisms, and systems, there could be no doubt respecting the apostle's meaning. The apostle undoubtedly intends some benefit, by being made alive. If so, the benefit is enjoyed by all. That all, who died in Adam, shall be made alive by Christ, is positively asserted. Whatever all men lost, by their death in Adam ; all men shall recover, by their life in Christ. This is the plain sense of the words.

1 Tim. ii. 6. "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." It seems that prejudice itself could not remain unconvinced any longer ; especially if it be considered, that Christ's
having

having given himself a ransom for all, is one reason the apostle assigns why we should pray for all. Now, if Christ hath given himself a ransom for all, all will eventually be saved; according to the idea in the last clause of the verse. Christ hath given himself a ransom for all, as will appear, be made manifest, in a proper time, or in the close of the mediatorial kingdom.

Heb. ii. 9. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." Here it is asserted, that, by the grace, or free favor, or love of God, Christ tasted death, or died for every man. Since this language cannot be evaded, every man will be saved, or the design of Christ's death will be defeated.

1 John ii. 2. "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

To reason on such a text as this, to show that the whole human race, which is the meaning of the whole world, will eventually be saved, would be an unpardonable imposition on the judgment of the reader.

God hath, in the most explicit manner, declared that it is his will that all men, should be saved; and this is perfectly sufficient, if there were no other proof to establish the doctrine, that all men will be saved.

Emck.

Ezek. xxxiii. 11. "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way, and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel." The last words of this text may be used, as an argument that some men will die, though God is willing they should live. Not to take up the matter here, I shall endeavor to prove, hereafter, that the second death, which many of the Israelites, and millions of others will doubtless, die, is no objection of any validity, against the final salvation of all men.

1 Tim. ii. 3, 4. After St. Paul had directed that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, should be made for all men; he adds, as a reason and motive to the practice of the duty of praying for all men; "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; *Who will have all men to be saved*, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

If we suppose that God the Father spoke in the prophet, and that the Saviour, Christ Jesus, is the person referred to by the apostle; this, certainly, does not weaken, but rather strengthen the argument for the salvation of all men; since their wills are in perfect and eternal harmony.

For my own personal satisfaction, I desire no more proof from scripture of the extent of the divine benevolence, and the salvation of all men, than I have adduced. Every person of reading is sensible that I have

have brought forward but a small part of that scripture proof of universal salvation, which hath been used both by the ancients and moderns.

Indeed, the difficulty does not lie in finding and making out the proof of the eternal salvation of all mankind; this is an easy task. The principal difficulty is, to clear this doctrine of divine benevolence from those objections which seem to lie against it from the representations of scripture, of the state and destination of the wicked at the day of general judgment; —the perpetuity of their misery;—and how to account for their restoration to virtue and happiness. No rational, consistent person, of any sect or denomination of christians, ever yet supposed that any rational creature could be happy, in any period of his existence, without virtue and holiness. And as it is undeniably evident from our Saviour's account of the general judgment, and from various declarations of his apostles, that a great part of mankind will then be found vicious and unholy, and be sentenced to a place of misery and torment; if this be their final sentence, and the wicked be then fixed in a state of sin and misery, that will not, cannot be altered by their repentance and conversion; the point must be given up; all men will not be happy. But if there are substantial reasons to think, that the state in which the wicked will be left by the sentence of the judge, will prove to them a state of salutary discipline, they may eventually become penitent, humble, reformed, virtuous, and happy.

As

As the greatest part of the scriptures Mr. S. has adduced, afford no objection against the eventual salvation of all men, but what originates from the hypothesis, that the transactions of the day of general judgment will be final with regard to all men; I shall endeavor, early in the third part, to show that this hypothesis is mistaken; and that mankind will enjoy a state, or states, of probation and discipline after the day of general judgment.

But, as it properly belongs to this 2d. part, to inquire whether it be God's gracious and benevolent design, that all men shall eventually be virtuous, I shall endeavor to offer some evidence of this, before I proceed to the 3d. part.

1. Thes. iv. 2. "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." St. Paul affirmed, in his 1st. epistle to Timothy, that it is the will of God our Saviour, that all men should be saved, *and come to the knowledge of the truth.*

2 Thes. ii. 13. "But we are bound to give thanks to God alway for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth."

These scriptures are sufficient to show, that the sanctification and holiness of all men is agreeable to the will of God. And it is worthy of remark, that, in the last cited text, it is declared to have been the original design and plan of God, that men should be made meet for salvation, by the influences of the spirit,

spirit, and the operations of his word. And in that text in Timothy, the same idea is contained, that God our Saviour will have *all men come to the knowledge of the truth*, as a mean of their preparation for salvation and happiness.

That in the operation of the benevolent mediatorial plan of God, all men will, in fact, be made virtuous and holy, is very evident from many scriptures. There is one that is so plain and express to this purpose, that it must strike conviction into every considerate, unbiassed mind. It is in St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, the xv. chap. 24—28, inclusively. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that did put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

Paraphrased thus, "Then cometh the end of the mediatorial dispensation, when Jesus the mediator shall deliver up his kingdom to God the Father; which event shall take place, when the mediator shall have effectually subdued all opposing rule, authority, and power. For the eternal design of the Father,

in

in raising his Son to the mediatorial throne, was, that he should sit there, till he had brought every enemy to his moral government, into voluntary and cheerful submission. The last enemy, death, the effect of moral evil, or enmity against God's moral government, shall also be destroyed. For God the Father committed to the authority and government of his Son, the Mediator, all things. God the Father only, who gave all this authority and power to the Son, is excepted, and not subjected to the Son, as is perfectly natural and reasonable. And when every moral and natural enemy shall be thus subdued unto the Son, then shall he also be subject to the Father, who gave him all this mediatorial authority and power; that God the Father may, thenceforth, be the conductor of the government, and dispenser of happiness to all his creatures."

It is carefully to be observed, that the apostle, in the 21d. and 23d. verses, speaks of the resurrection of the virtuous, in their proper rank and order, after Christ, the captain of their salvation, and the first fruits of the great harvest. "Then," says the apostle, "cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father." But the meaning is not, that Christ, at the resurrection and general judgment, shall deliver up the mediatorial kingdom to the Father; as is plain from this consideration, that the mediatorial work will not then be completed. It is the universal opinion, almost, that, at the conclusion of the general judgment, the right-

eous

cous will go into life eternal, and that the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment. And this is the opinion which I adopt, as thinking it the most agreeable to the analogy of scripture. Allowing this opinion to be true, sin and death, the only enemies we have ever yet heard of in the universe, will still remain. Sin, the great enemy of God's moral government; and death, the enemy of man's happiness, are left in perfect vigor, and in the full exercise of their authority and power, against the government of God, and the happiness of man. Does this consist with St. Paul's express declaration, that, "*he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet*?" What! shall Christ, who assumed mediatorial authority, and all power in heaven and earth, for the express purpose of destroying *the works of the devil*, sin and death, return the kingdom to the Father, leaving one half the human race under the power of the devil, and of the second death? We may not entertain an idea so reproachful to God, so derogatory to the honor and merits of the Mediator, and so gratifying to the devil. Never will the Mediator deliver up his kingdom, till he hath destroyed the last enemy, death.

St. Paul was not of Mr. S.'s opinion, that sin and death must be kept in the universe, to produce the greatest glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom.

That sin is an enemy, both to God and man, no one, except it be those who are of Mr. S.'s opinion, will deny. That death is an enemy, St. Paul affirms.

Sin

Sin and death, then, must be destroyed, before Christ delivers up his kingdom.

The only objection, that I can see, against my paraphrase of St. Paul's language, above cited, or to the subsequent observations, is this, Christ may reduce devils and wicked men under his authority and control, and yet not totally rid the universe of sin and death. This objection takes its rise from the *kind of subjection or reduction* that is intended. A few reflections must entirely remove this difficulty, and lead us to a clear discernment of the kind of reduction intended.

God's government is both natural and moral. His natural government, is conducted by power, and is a government of power. His moral government is a government of laws, founded on eternal reason and rectitude, and sanctioned by promises and threatenings, rewards and punishments.

No created being ever thought of opposing or resisting the natural government of God. "Sin," the catechism informs us, "is a want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God." I wish to know how sin can be reduced under subjection to Christ, or to the moral government of God, whilst it remains? So long as it hath a being, it will remain to be, in conformity to the law of God, or disobedience. Can a wicked man be justly said to be reduced under the moral government of God, whilst he continues a wicked man? There is no other way of subduing sin but to destroy its existence. No
other

other way of subduing a wicked man, but to convince and convert him. The sinner is as much under the natural government of God, as the saint; and satan, as gabriel. Christ came not to reduce men, nor devils, under the natural government of God. He came to destroy rebellion against God's moral government; and he must reign till he does it.

Thus it appears, I think, undeniably plain, that Christ's work as Mediator will not terminate, at the resurrection and general judgment; but that he will go on still conquering and to conquer, till he shall have destroyed both sin and death.

To give the reader, if possible, a clearer idea of the progress of mediatorial work, in raising the dead both good and bad;—in rewarding the righteous, reigning with them, making a new heaven and earth for them;—in punishing the wicked with a second death;—and opening the prospect of their final reduction and restoration, &c. I beg leave to recite, and to attempt to explain, a passage in St. John's revelation.

The passage, which I propose to recite, is the xx. and a part of the xxi. chapter. I will recite a verse, and then immediately give its meaning.

Rev. xx. 1. "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand,"

And I saw an angel descend from heaven, and he seemed to hold in his hand the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain.

2. "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent,

pent, which is the devil, and bound him a thousand years.

And the angel appeared to take hold on the dragon, that old serpent, who is the devil, and put a restraint upon him for the term of a thousand years.

3. "And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."

And the angel seemed to cast the old serpent into the bottomless pit, to shut him up, and effectually to forbid his deceiving mankind; till the expiration of the thousand years: then he will be released from confinement for a season.

4. "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

And I saw thrones, and those who sat upon them, and judicial power was given to them; I saw also the souls of those who were beheaded for the witness they bore to Jesus, and to the word of God; and who had not worshipped the beast, nor received his image, or mark, upon their foreheads; or in their hands; and all these, both martyrs and others, lived

N

and

and reigned with Christ, in their bodies a thousand years, and suffered no disturbance or molestation from the devil, or from wicked men, by his influence.

5. "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished."

But the wicked, who were dying the second death, did not live again, and enjoy such a life as the martyrs, and other saints, enjoyed, till the expiration of the thousand years.

6. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

Blessed and holy, or separated, is he who enjoys a part in the first resurrection to a happy life; for the second death shall have no power over such persons: and they shall live a happy life with Christ, illustriously distinguished from the rest of mankind, for a thousand years of perfect peace.

7. "And when the thousand years shall be expired, satan shall be loosed out of his prison."

And when these thousand years shall expire, satan shall again be permitted to use his arts of deception and disorder among the wicked, and to attempt the disturbance of the peace of the world.

8. "And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea."

And satan shall go out into the four quarters of the

the earth, to gather the enemies of the saints, like Gog and Magog, mentioned by the prophet Ezekiel; to battle against the saints: the number of these enemies of the saints is as the sand of the sea.

9. "And they went up on the breadth of the earth and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven and destroyed them."

And these multitudes went up from all parts of the earth, and surrounded the camp of the saints, and even the beloved city New Jerusalem; but they did not succeed against the saints, for fire from God, out of heaven, destroyed them.

10. "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

And the devil, who excited all this enmity, and collected all this multitude, against the saints, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, with the beast and false prophet, where they are perpetually tormented for ages of ages.

11. "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them."

To resume the series and order of events, at the same time that I saw satan restrained, as mentioned above, I saw a great white throne, and upon it a glorious personage, from the brightness of whose face,

face, heaven and earth were changed, and their present form disappeared.

12. "And I saw the dead small and great stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works."

And I saw the dead, small and great, young and old, raised to life, and standing before the throne of God; and they all were judged, according, to their works, with the most perfect justice and equity.

13. "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead, which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works."

And, whether men had died on the sea, or on the land, the whole invisible state and place of the dead, delivered up the dead that were in them; so that the assembly was universal, including all that had lived; and they were all judged according to their works.

14. "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death,"

And the number was so great that were cast into the lake of fire, that death and hell, or the whole invisible state of the dead might be said to have been cast into the lake. This lake of fire causes the second death.

15. "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

And

And all who were not found written in the book of life, were cast into the lake of fire; this makes their number so great.

Chap. xxi. 1. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away: and there was no more sea."

After I had seen the judgment passed upon all mankind, and the wicked cast into the lake of fire, to die the second death; I saw the preparation made for those whose names were found written in the Lamb's book of life. I saw a new regenerated heaven and earth, as the form of the present heaven and earth had passed away. And in this renovated state of the heaven and earth there was no sea.

2. "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

And the form of the new heaven and earth was so splendid and glorious, that it seemed as though heaven itself, the blest abode of the great Eternal, had descended to earth; a most ornamented dwelling for the bride, the Lamb's wife, the church composed of all the saints.

3. "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."

And I heard a divine proclamation made, Behold,
the

the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will vouchsafe his divine presence, like the Shckinah in the Jewish temple, and shall dwell among these blessed and holy ones, who share in the first resurrection, in the new heaven and earth ; and these shall be the people of God.

St. John proceeds to a long description of this renewed earth, the dwelling place of saints.

We may institute a few enquiries, in order to render the meaning of this passage of St. John plain and intelligible to every careful, judicious reader.

1. Where shall we fix the scene of St. John's vision ?

2. Who those were whom he saw sitting on thrones ? and who were those that were beheaded ?

3. What is meant by the thousand years life and reign of the saints with Christ, and where shall this thousand years be placed, whether before or after the general resurrection and judgment ?

4. What we are to understand by the expression *the rest of the dead lived not till the thousand years were finished* ?

5. What is meant by the first resurrection ?

6. What by Gog and Magog, and when they were drawn together against the saints ;

If we can answer these inquiries according to the analogy of scripture, it will doubtless, be satisfactory to the reader, and open an entertaining prospect to his view.

1. Where shall we fix the scene of St. John's vision ?

vision? If we carefully consider and compare St. Peter and St. John, we may satisfy ourselves that the earth is the scene of the vision, and the place where the righteous will be rewarded, and the wicked punished, after the resurrection and general judgment.

The passage in St. Peter, to which I refer, is in his second epistle, Chap. iii. 7—13, inclusively. "But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."—Here is a plain intimation that the earth, when changed by fire, shall be the place of the *perdition of ungodly men*. And this is not at all inconsistent with the place also of the happy residence of the righteous; as we shall see more fully afterwards. We proceed with St. Peter's prophetic representation. "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."—Here is something very worthy of notice, and, it being so happily coincident with my principal design, I doubt not the reader will excuse me for adverting to it. The apostle had just observed that the earth was destined as the place of *judgment and perdition of ungodly men*; and given us to understand that it would suffer, by the change which fire would effect upon it, to such a degree, as to render it a proper place

place for the execution of the divine judicial sentence, to be passed on the ungodly. Yet the apostle expressly informs us, that God, from his desire of the repentance of the wicked, delayed the time of placing them in a far more disagreeable situation on earth, than that which they now were in. This, at once, gives us a most exalted opinion of the divine benevolence towards sinners, and some rational idea of hell or the next state of those who die impenitent from under God's present dispensation. This earth, when changed by fire, and, in some part of it, made to suffer very considerably by the change, will be the place of hell to the ungodly.

To return; "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night;" suddenly and with surprising circumstances; "in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

This promise, referred to by St. Peter, we find in Isa. lxxv. 17, 18, 19. "For behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth: and the former shall not be

be remembered, nor come into mind. But be you glad and rejoice forever in that which I create : for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people, and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying." If God would rejoice in the new Jerusalem which he should create ; and joy in his people there ; and if no more weeping nor crying should be heard in her ; with great propriety is the Jewish church exhorted to be glad and rejoice in that which God would create, and not to suffer the former Jerusalem to be fondly remembered, nor *come upon their heart* ; as the Hebrew expression signifies.

Here God, by the prophet, promises to create a new heaven and earth ; that it should be called Jerusalem ; that He would rejoice in that new Jerusalem, and in his people there ; and that there should be no weeping nor crying in the new Jerusalem. Now let us compare this with St. John's vision. Chap. xxi. 1, 2, 3, 4. " And I saw a new heaven and a new earth ; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away ; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

" And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be
 O their

their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."

The hypothesis, that the earth, in her regenerated state, will be the future residence of the virtuous, is thus shown to be very agreeable with the analogy of prophetic scripture.

And how easy will it be with God, in the future conflagration, to fit up and prepare a part of this earth for the dwelling place of his saints, in their incorruptible and glorified bodies; whilst the other part should be permitted so to suffer by the conflagration, as to become a very disagreeable habitation for the ungodly and sinners.

Thus we may have some intelligible idea of heaven and hell; whereas, according to the common representation, we can obtain no adequate conception of either.

2. Who were they whom St. John saw sitting on thrones, and who were the beheaded?

I think the original words are well rendered, *and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them.*

By consulting the language of the new Testament, we shall be satisfied who these were, who sat on thrones, and had judicial power given to them. Our blessed Saviour says to his disciples, Matt. xxv. 21. "Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee

thee ruler over many things: Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Looking forward to the resurrection and retribution day, our Saviour says to the apostles, Matt. xix. 28. "Ye, which have followed me, even ye, in the *regeneration*;" or new earth; "shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." And St. Paul, speaking to the Corinthians, says, 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3.

"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?" And in this book of St. John, Jesus is represented as saying, Chap. iii. 21.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne." From all which, it clearly appears, that the saints will be highly promoted by Christ, and admitted to some sort of assessorship with him in the judgment of the great day.

When, therefore, St. John says, "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them"; the meaning is, that he saw saints, those whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life, sitting on thrones with some kind of judiciary power, according to our Saviour's promise to his disciples, to those who should overcome, and to all his saints.

By

By the beheaded, or the souls of those who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, martyrs are intended; all who died in the cause of Christ and of his religion, by the hands of their enemies.

St. John saw all the saints, both martyrs and others, sitting on thrones as assessors with Christ.

3. What is meant by the thousand years, in which the saints and martyrs reign with Christ? and where are we to place them, before or after, the general resurrection and judgment?

The restraint laid on satan was for a thousand years; and during that term, he should not deceive the nations, or the wicked among mankind, nor disturb the peace of the saints. For this term of satan's restraint, the saints should reign with Christ in undisturbed repose; or without any attempts from satan, or from wicked men, to molest or annoy them. And this, I imagine, may be the reason why the term, a thousand years, is mentioned. It is worthy of notice, that, immediately after the expiration of the thousand years, satan is released from confinement, and enters readily upon his beloved employment, of deceiving the wicked and troubling the saints. "And when the thousand years," of the saint's reign and his confinement, "are expired, satan shall be loosed out of his prison."

After the thousand years of undisturbed tranquillity, the saints shall still go on to reign, forever and ever. Rev. xxi. 5. "And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light
of

of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign forever and ever.' "

As to the situation of this thousand years, I am fully of opinion with Dr. Chauncy, that it ought to be placed after the general resurrection and judgment. If it be placed, as commentators and divines have generally placed it, immediately after the destruction of antichrist, and before the coming of Christ, all those difficulties come into view, which Dr. Chauncy mentions, and which every attentive reader must see to be insurmountable.

How can we account for the rise of that infinitude of wicked men, like the *sand of the sea* for multitude, called Gog and Magog, immediately after a thousand years of profound peace, and a universal reign of righteousness over all the Jewish and Gentile world? It appears to me absolutely impossible to account for it, on this hypothesis of the situation of the thousand years.

Gog and Magog were ancient enemies of the Jewish church and nation. And it is remarkable that they were threatened with the same destruction, by fire, which St. John tells us will destroy the Gog and Magog who shall endeavor to disturb the christian church in the paradisaic earth.

Ezek. xxxviii. 18. "And it shall come to pass at the same time, when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, that my fury shall come up in my face." Chap. xxxix. 6. "And I will send a fire on

on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles, and they shall know that I am the Lord."

St. John says, Rev. xx. 9. "And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them."

Our Saviour informs us, that moral corruption and depravity of manners shall be so great, and so universal, when he shall come again, as to make it necessary to burn the world in order to purify it. Matt. xxiv. 37, 38, 39. "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating, and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not, until the flood came, and took them all away: So shall also the coming of the Son of man be." And again, describing the universal degeneracy of mankind, Christ says, Luke xviii. 8. "Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" And St. Paul, 2 Thes. i. 8. 9. says Christ shall come, "in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

Now, according to the supposition we are combating, Christ will come immediately on the expiration
of

of the Millennium. Is it not, then, incredible that such universal corruption should overspread the world?

Place this millennial state after the general resurrection and judgment, and let it be the same term that satan will be restrained; and all these difficulties vanish, and we may very easily account for the rise of Gog and Magog, and every thing appears natural and rational. St. John says, Chap. xx. 14, 15. "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

These multitudes of the human race, who will be condemned in the general judgment, and cast into the lake of fire, and confined to that disagreeable part of the earth which God will assign them, with the devil and false prophet; may easily be supposed, when restraint is taken off, to be prepared for any attempt, especially when abetted and excited by satan.

Thus it appears rational, and agreeable to the analogy of scripture, that the Millennium will commence immediately after the general judgment, will continue whilst satan is confined, and be a happy reign with Christ.

4. What are we to understand by the expression, *the rest of the dead lived not till the thousand years were finished?*

By *the rest of the dead*, we are to understand all the rest of mankind, who were not described in the foregoing

foregoing verse. All, except martyrs and those whose names were written in the lamb's book of life are included in the terms, *the rest of the dead*. And, by their not living, *till the thousand years were finished*, is meant, their not living *such* a life as saints and martyrs lived ; a happy reign with Christ.

Thus representing one part of mankind as enjoying happy life with Christ, whilst the other part, though raised from the dead at the same time, are in a state of suffering ; is perfectly agreeable to the whole current of New Testament scriptures. Matt. iii. 12. " Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner ; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." That mixture of wheat and chaff, of saints and sinners in the present state of Christ's church, will not continue always ; for the time is coming when a clear and decided separation shall be made. This is most explicitly declared by our Saviour, in the parable of the wheat and tares, Matt. xiii. 24—30. " Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field : But, while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came, and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field ? from whence then hath it tares ? He said unto them, an enemy hath done this. The
servants

servants said unto him ; Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up ? But he said, Nay ; lest, while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest : and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles, to burn them : but gather the wheat into my barn." Afterwards, Jesus gratified his disciples with the explanation of this parable.—" The good seed are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one ; the enemy that sowed them is the devil ; the harvest is the end of the world ; and the reapers are the angels. As, therefore, the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire ; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth in the kingdom of their Father."

These are the same ideas with those of St. John. The wicked are cast into a furnace of fire according to our Saviour : they are cast into a lake of fire according to St. John. Our Saviour says, " the righteous shall shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father ;" St. John says, " they lived and reigned with Christ." In the most express representation our Saviour hath given us of the general judgment, we find that, at the same time that

the righteous are approved and rewarded ; the wicked are condemned and are punished ; Matt. xxv. " Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world— Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."—And we find these sentences immediately put in execution. " And these shall go away into everlasting punishment : but the righteous into life eternal."—If we are right in the interpretation of the expression of St. John, " But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished," as I think we are ; here is a plain intimation that they may live in the same manner with the righteous, or at least, that some of them may, after the thousand years shall be finished.

5. What is meant by the *first resurrection* ? What we have seen under the 4th inquiry, leads us to suppose that the righteous and wicked are both raised together ; both stand together on the scene of the general judgment ; both hear the sentence of the judge at nearly the same time ; and that both receive the execution of it together ; the one going into *everlasting punishment*, and the other into *life eternal*. But, if there could be any doubt whether the righteous and the wicked will be raised at the same time, our Saviour hath removed it. John v. 28, 29. " The hour is coming, in the which all that are

are in their graves shall hear his voice, and come forth ; they that have done good, to the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation." In the words of our Saviour, there is something very observable in confirmation of our interpretation of the expression in St. John, *but the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished*. Our Saviour does not allow that the wicked are raised to *life*, though they are raised from the grave. "They that have done *good*, to the resurrection *of life* ; and they that have done *evil* to the resurrection," not *of life*, but "of *damnation*," or death ; they are raised in order to die the second death.

This passage of our Saviour affords us a plain and positive answer to our present inquiry, What does St. John mean by a *first resurrection* ? plainly, a resurrection *to life*.

It was the first resurrection to a happy and glorious reign with Christ in the new earth. And well did St. John call him *blessed and holy*, or separated and distinguished, who hath part in the *first resurrection*. Such are admitted to a great and honorary privilege. Now, if we allow St. John to have spoken intelligibly, and with propriety ; there is another resurrection to be expected. Those who are cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death, may rise to happy life, of the same kind with that which those of the first resurrection enjoy.

We have already anticipated the answer to our 6th. inquiry,

inquiry, Who we are to understand by Gog and Magog ? They are wicked men who are suffering the second death.

I have been long on this passage of scripture ; but as brief as I could well be, consistently with a full exposition. And I really think we have had things of very great importance under consideration.

We have seen a rational and intelligible, as well as scriptural, account given of heaven and hell. We have also seen that the martyrs, and all the saints, all righteous persons in this life, shall sit on thrones, with judicial power in the general judgment. That these shall reign a thousand years with Christ in the new earth, without any attempt from satan, or from wicked men, to break their peace ; and afterwards for ages of ages. We have also seen, that the wicked dead, though raised from the grave, shall not live again, or live a happy life until a thousand years after the general judgment. We have seen that the martyrs and all whose names are in the book of life, shall enjoy the first resurrection to a happy life ; and that the first resurrection to happy life, encourages us to expect another, and, perhaps, many others, of the same kind. We have finally seen that satan and wicked men will attempt to disturb the peace and to interrupt the happiness of the saints in the new earth ; but that fire from God out of heaven shall destroy them. A most joyful consideration to every pious, virtuous mind, that the enemies

emies of the saints, in the new earth, shall not succeed against them. They shall be destroyed. The peace of the new Jerusalem shall not be broken nor interrupted.



PART THIRD.

Objections Answered.

BEFORE I enter upon the business of answering objections, I wish to make some preliminary observations.

1. I entertain no idea that any son or daughter of Adam will, or can, be happy without holiness. So long as any person is unholy, that person must unavoidably be miserable. No text of scripture, therefore, that tends to prove the necessity of holiness in order to happiness, is any objection against that scheme of universal salvation which I adopt.

2. I have no idea that all men will be virtuous or happy, at the resurrection and general judgment. No new testament writer hath extended his ideas so far into the resurrection world as St. John. He hath plainly informed us, that but a part of mankind shall be so *blessed* and *holy*, as to have part in the first resurrection to happy life; and that a vast multitude, at the close of the general judgment, will be cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death. So that no passage of scripture, that goes to prove that some will die wicked and unholy; or rise from the grave unholy; or be condemned by the judge, and sentenced to a state of misery, at the close
of

of the general judgment; contains any objection against my scheme of the eventual salvation of all men.

3. No scriptures, which speak of the future misery of the wicked as very great, or of very long duration, afford any objection against the final salvation of all men.

4. Any passage of scripture which expressly declares, that it is not the will of God that all men should be saved; or that fixes a positive eternity to the duration of the future misery of the wicked, and no other, is a valid objection against my scheme of universal salvation. If God be unwilling that all men should be saved; or, if he hath any where declared, that the future misery of the wicked shall be interminable; I will readily concede that all men cannot be happy.

With these preliminary observations, I will enter on the examination of Mr. S.'s scripture proof of the eternity of future misery. And I wish the reader would be so kind, as to keep the foregoing observations in view, whilst he is reading the examination of Mr. S.'s scriptures.

The xvii. chap. of John, which is one of his scriptures, we have already considered; and, as I think, shown undeniably, not only that Mr. S. hath treated that passage with great unfairness, and dissingenuity; but that the passage is an excellent proof of the final salvation of all men. The reader, by turning to p. 63, will find the entrance on the examination of this scripture.

After

After Mr. S. had finished his observations he proceeded to other passages of our Saviour's discourses.

He begins his 4th sec. on p. 21, in this manner, "The question whether all men shall be saved, is expressly resolved by Jesus Christ, in so plain a manner, that it seems strange any who profess to believe the holy scriptures should doubt the event." After this what can we reasonably expect, from a divine, a gentleman of good abilities, short of the most plain and positive assertions of our Saviour, either that God is unwilling that all men should be saved, or that the future misery of the wicked will be without end? The passage of scripture he recites is the xiii. chap. of St. Luke, 23—30 verses inclusively. "Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us: and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence you are: Then shall ye begin to say, we have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence you are; depart from me, ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in
in

in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out."

If we should allow this to be a representation of the sentence of the eternal judge, at the conclusion of the general judgment, excluding some from heaven; and dooming them to a place of misery; still it is no proof that these very persons, thus excluded from heaven, and doomed to misery, shall not be saved; or that their misery shall never terminate. So that there is not a single word in all this passage which affords the least objection against the salvation of all men.

If Mr. S. had proved that the present life is the only probation time for mankind; then such a passage, as the above, might have been well introduced, as proof that some will never be saved. But till he shall have done this, such scriptures are not to his purpose. Yea, I will concede more to Mr. S. If he will produce one single passage of scripture, that renders it as probable that this life terminates man's state of trial, as the passage in St. John, which we have considered, renders it probable that it will not; I will freely allow him to cite such passages as this of our Saviour in proof of eternal misery. And I think this a fair concession.

St. John hath expressly mentioned a first resurrection to life; plainly giving us to understand that there will be a second.

Yet, wonderful as it may seem, Mr. S. says, presently after citing this scripture, "Many shall *never*

Q

be

wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." That, by the children of the wicked one, wicked and sinful men are intended, no one wishes to deny. I wonder what kind of universalists Mr. S. is contending with? He says, p. 25. "If all the universalists in the world with the most critical knowledge of the powers of language, should attempt to express the proposition, that all men will be saved; they could not do it in more definite and pointed language, than Jesus Christ hath expressed the contrary proposition, that at the day of judgment men shall be separated, and part of them go into a state of the most extreme misery." That a part of mankind will go into a state of the most extreme misery, after the day of judgment, is not, in any sense, contrary to this proposition, that all men will be saved. That some men, at the day of judgment, will go into a state of extreme misery that will absolutely have no end, is indeed a proposition contrary to this, that all men will be saved. And this is the very contrary proposition that Mr. S. ought to support. But not a single word yet hath he produced in support of such a proposition.

Mr. S. proceeds to assert a proposition that is most undeniably destitute of all truth. And I admire that a gentleman of his abilities would assert such a proposition, and let it come abroad. Speaking of the future misery, he says, p. 25. "A misery, which is pictured to us by the strongest expressions,

sions, which the nature of our present state will admit us to understand." What makes it plain that Mr. S. has reference to the perpetuity, as well as to the greatness of the future misery is, what he says elsewhere, p. 39. "The description of this misery is expressed by a vast variety of words, and expressions, denoting perpetuity without end, *as much as language can do it.*" I would ask Mr. S. to take his Greek Testament, and turn to Heb. vii. 16. He will there find the Greek epithet, which is rendered *endless*, joined to *life*; if he will find the passage where this epithet is applied to the death or future misery, of the wicked, I shall readily acknowledge that he hath done something very important indeed, towards proving that future punishment will be endless. *Immortal, incorruptible*, are words of our language, and used in the new Testament; and I should not be afraid to submit it to Mr. S. himself, as a scholar, whether they do not signify perpetuity without end, much more clearly than any words our Saviour hath used, to express the continuance of future misery. The next passage of scripture Mr. S. cites is Matt. xxii. 11—14. "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment; and he said unto him, friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? and he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called: but few are chosen."

Upon

were of quite a different opinion. They suppose that, at the resurrection, the earth shall be transformed, in some part of it at least, and made a proper dwelling place for the saints ; and that the other part of it will be the lake of fire into which the wicked will be cast at the close of the general judgment.— This transformation of the earth is no novel idea; the psalmist foresaw and predicted it, though, possibly, he might not foresee all the uses of the transformed and renovated earth. Ps. cii. 25, 26.— “ Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth ; and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure : yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment ; and as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed.”— That the consequences of the general judgment, as they respect either the righteous, or the wicked, will be immutable and eternal, we have no reason to think. St. John, as we have seen, speaks of very great changes, both with regard to the righteous and the wicked. Martyrs and saints shall reign with Christ a thousand years in perfect peace :—satan shall be restrained during this term ;—and wicked men shall be suffering the second death :—at the close of this millenium, perhaps millions of millions of the human race shall rise to happy life, join the saints in the new earth, and experience the effects of almighty power in destroying the wicked dead, and satan at their head. Then, St. John tells us, the saints shall go on and reign with Christ *for ages of ages ;—*

ages;—within which term all the wicked dead may be restored to virtue and happiness; and the second death, the last enemy, being destroyed, the mediatorial plan may close, and Jesus deliver up the kingdom to the Father; and God shall thenceforth be all in all, for eternal ages. Mr. S. may think as I do in the present world, as to many of these events now named; if not, I am persuaded he will hereafter.—We shall think more alike in the new earth, than we do in this old crazy one. Mr. S. next proceeds to recite our Saviour's representation of the grand and amazing scene of the general judgment. My readers are well acquainted with that representation. I shall recite only the last verse of the chapter. "And these shall go away into *everlasting* punishment; but the righteous into life *eternal*." An observation, which Mr. S. immediately makes, is this, p. 31.—"The words translated everlasting and eternal in the last verse, are expressed by the same Greek word in the original, and whatever duration of blessedness the righteous have, the same duration of misery is declared concerning the wicked."

Mr. S. cannot intend, either from the real or customary meaning of the words used by our Saviour, to prove the never ending punishment of the wicked, or the never ending life of the righteous.—"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." From both the words used to signify the future punishment of the wicked, it seems as though our Saviour really intended

intended to convey his meaning in a manner least liable to be misunderstood. The word *kolasis*, used by our Saviour to express the future punishment of the wicked, properly, and in its most customary meaning, signifies *chastisement*. And the epithet applied to it *aionion*, signifies *of*, or *belonging to, an age, or dispensation*, whether the age or dispensation be long or short.

Grotius, in his rights of war and peace, as I find him quoted by Petitpierre, says, "that the kind of punishment which tends to the improvement of the criminal, is what the philosophers called, among other things, *kolasis* or *chastisement*. Wytenbach, quoted by the same author, says, "that God, by the infliction of sufferings, has three ends in view; the first of which, is the correction of the offender, in order to his future amendment. And that the Greeks frequently gave to such sufferings the name *kolasis*. As to *aionios*, the derivative of *aion*, it cannot signify, naturally, any more than *of*, or *belonging to, an age*; since the substantive *aion* signifies *an age*.

The proper translation of the Greek of Matthew xxv. 46, is, "And these shall go away into a state of chastisement; but the righteous into an age of life." And this very well agrees with our Saviour's language elsewhere, and with the language of St. John. We have seen in a foregoing text, John v. 28, 29, that all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the son of man, and come forth, "they that have done good to the resurrection of life; and they

they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation." Here, our Saviour says the righteous shall rise to *life*, and the wicked to *damnation*, or *death*. In Matt. it is, the righteous shall go into an *age of life*; and the wicked into an *age* or *state*, or *dispensation* of *chastisement*; the same that St. John means by the second death.

Mr. Whiston, in his *Eternity of Hell Torments* considered, p. 21, has these words, "There is no end of reciting more *ordinances*, or *statutes*, or *grounds*, which were to be *eternal*, or *everlasting*, or *to last forever*, in our modern way of interpreting those Greek words: which yet were to last no longer, at the utmost, than the Mosaic economy itself; and have many, very many, of them ceased; or at least have been intermitted above sixteen hundred years together." After so much hath been said and wrote upon the signification of these two words *aioun* and *aiouaios*, it certainly cannot be necessary for me to proceed to a long detail of examples of the use of these words, in the Old or New Testament. I shall content myself by presenting my reader with a few passages only, in which these words really signify an *age*, *dispensation*, *period*, whether of longer or shorter continuance.

In the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament, there are many examples of this use of these words. To cite only a few. Gen. vi. 4. "There were giants in the earth in those days, mighty men which were of old, *ap' aiouaios*;" from eternity, according

word which signifies their punishment ; is not conclusive ; it is faulty reasoning. And yet Mr. S. hath affirmed that, " whatever duration of blessedness the righteous have, the same duration of misery is declared concerning the wicked." Mr. S. certainly knows how *aion* and *aionios* are used in the New Testament ; how the inconclusiveness of his reasoning escaped his notice, I cannot say. I hope it was an innocent escape. The fact is we can neither prove the perpetuity of the happiness of the righteous, nor of the misery of the wicked, merely from the use of the Greek word, rendered *everlasting*, or *eternal*. And, if we must recur to the things, their *qualities*, *properties*, and other *circumstances*, to determine the duration both of future happiness and misery ; why is so much time lavished upon the grammatical and critical use of those little words ? Can it be, that men wish to show one another, and the world, that they know how to read and construe Greek ?

Dr. Edwards, in his forecited book, p. 251, speaking of the meaning of the disputed words, says, " In sixty-five *instances*, including six instances in which it is applied to future punishment, it plainly signifies endless duration." The word does not *of itself* signify an endless duration. For as the Dr. had just observed, the same word, in *thirty-two places*, means a limited duration. Can the same word, *of itself*, mean both a limited, and an unlimited, duration. Nothing can be plainer, than that the nature of the
subject,

subject, to which the word *soon* is applied, must ever determine its meaning. So that Dr. Edwards had no right to determine the meaning of the word in those six places to which he refers to, before he had put the matter of the duration of future misery out of all dispute, by the most direct and positive proof of its never ending duration. But as I intend a critical examination of Dr. Edwards's book, as soon as I shall have finished the present examination; I will say no more of it now.

I wish Mr. S. had been a little more methodical; and, if he really had, as he seems to have, two objects in view; one, to prove the eternity of future misery; the other, to prove that there would be future misery; that he had kept these two objects distinct. I have no concern with any proof of the *being* of future misery. The scriptures Mr. S. produces to prove the perpetuity of future misery, are all that I have any concern with. Mr. S. often infers the perpetuity from the existence of future misery; which obliges me to take notice of some of his texts, which I should, otherwise, have no concern with. As, from the parable of Dives and Lazarus, he makes the following observation, p. 23. "And if that gulph could not be passed, their misery must be without end." If there be a gulph now, between heaven and hell, the power and grace of God are sufficient to remove it. Mr. S. ought to have proved that the gulph that will interpose itself between heaven and hell, at the close of the general judgment,

ment, will never be removed. The plentiful positive proof of the final salvation of all men, is not, in the least, affected by any such passages of scripture, as these Mr. S. produces. If there be any texts which declare, in unequivocal language, that the future misery of the wicked will absolutely be endless, why are they not brought forward? One of Mr. S.'s texts I will recite, merely to show the reader what a facility he has acquired, of introducing ideas into his inferences, which are not to be found in his premises. It is John viii. 21—24. "I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins; whithersoever I go ye cannot come. Then said the Jews, will he kill himself? because he saith, whithersoever I go, ye cannot come. And he said unto them, ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." Mr. S.'s inference follows, p. 33. "He prays the Father that all those who were given to him might be with him, where he is; and he here says, there are some who *never can be with him*; the consequence is plain." Does the reader perceive that, in the passage of scripture above cited, Christ anywhere says, there are some who *can never be with him*? Christ prayed for the world, as we have seen; that the world might believe and know that the Father had sent him; which knowledge and faith he

he himself declares to be eternal life. What will prevent the world's finally going where he is ?

The next scriptures Mr. S. produces, are those which speak of blasphemy against the holy Ghost. He cites Matt. xii. 31, 32.—Mark iii. 29.—And Luke xii. 10. "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men : but the blasphemy against the holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him ; but whosoever speaketh against the holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world : neither in the world to come." —" He that shall blaspheme against the holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation. Unto him that blasphemeth against the holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven."

The interpretation of these passages given by the great and learned Grotius is, at least, very plausible, and agreeable to the analogy of the scriptures. Grotius supposes the words of our Saviour to have been spoken according to a manner of speaking which was very frequent and familiar with the Jews, by which they represented the extreme difficulty of some things, in comparison of others.

His reasoning on the subject, as Dr. Chauncy has it, is as follows, salvation of all men, p. 333, 334. " It could not be the design of our Saviour, in the former part of these sentences, where he speaks of *other* sins and blasphemies, to affirm *absolutely* concerning them, that *they shall be forgiven* ; because

T

this

this is not true in fact, as there are multitudes of *these sins* that are *not* forgiven : and therefore," says he, " we ought, in all reason, to look upon these sentences as Hebrew forms of speech, like that in the 5th chap. of Matthew, where our Saviour declares, that heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. The meaning of which is explained by Luke, in the sixteenth chapter of his gospel, where the words are, not that *heaven and earth shall pass away*, but that *it is easier for them to pass away*, than that Christ's words should fail."—It is a common way of speaking among the Jews, *this thing shall be, and that shall not be*, when it was not their intention to affirm any thing absolutely of either, but only to express the greater difficulty of effecting the *latter* than the *former*."—Upon which he concludes that the only meaning of our Saviour, in the words is, that it is easier to obtain the pardon of *any sins*, and therefore of the *greatest blasphemies*, than the blasphemy against the holy Ghost. As if it was his design to be understood comparatively, signifying the *greater heinousness of the blasphemy against the holy Ghost, and that the pardon of it would be more difficultly* obtained ; not that it is *strictly and absolutely unpardonable*. He refers us, as the final confirmation of this sense of the words, to 1 Sam. ii. 25. where he supposes there is a like comparative mode of speech with this of our Saviour, if one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him : but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him?"—

I esteem this interpretation of Grotius as very rational and judicious, and well supported by scripture analogy. I am well satisfied with it.

But I will propose another to the reader, and he may compare them. After the direct and positive proof I have produced from scripture, that the Mediator will never deliver up his kingdom to the Father, till the last enemy is subdued; I no more doubt of the final virtue and happiness of all men than of any thing that is proveable by scripture evidence. According to St. John, there is a second resurrection to happy life. Our Saviour says that the blasphemy against the holy Ghost shall not be forgiven, *neither in this world, neither in the world to come: neither in this age, nor in the next age.* St. John expressly informs us that some shall be tormented in the *lake of fire for ages of ages.* This is the longest term mentioned in scripture, for the duration of the future misery of any part of mankind.

And this term is exactly commensurate with the reign of the saints with Christ in the new earth, according to St. John. Now as some of the wicked will lie in the lake of fire *for ages of ages*; blasphemers of the holy Ghost may make a part of this number. And, after they have suffered the pains of hell, and lain in the lake of fire *for ages*, they may be forgiven, without any contradiction of the literal expressions of our Saviour. They have then not been forgiven *neither in this world, neither in the world to come*; but have suffered *eternal damnation.*

This

This interpretation is as satisfactory to my mind as that of Grotius. But, as the utmost that can happen to the blasphemer of the holy Ghost, is, that he be in danger of eternal damnation; if he must suffer this extremity of punishment, it will be no final bar in the way of his enjoyment of that salvation, that will be absolutely without end.

Our Saviour, according to what we have recorded, was extremely cautious in his manner of expression. If he had studied ever so long, he could not have expressed better his great detestation of the sin of blasphemy against the holy Ghost; and, at the same time, have guarded more effectually than he has done against error. He first says, as Matthew records it, "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy of the holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men."

But least a wrong construction should be put upon what he had already said, if he left it there; he goes on to an explanation of himself; "And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world," or *age*, "neither in the world," or *age*, "to come."—Mark records it thus, "He that shall blaspheme against the holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." This verse is justly rendered thus, "Whoever shall blaspheme against the holy Ghost,

Ghost, hath not forgiveness during an age ; but is guilty of the judgment of an age."

When it is said, " he hath never forgiveness ;" the words rendered *never* are *eis ton aionon* ; and eternal judgment is, *aioniou kriseos*, judgment that is of the duration of an age ; as the words may be justly and truly rendered.

Finally, the perpetuity of the judgment which the blasphemer against the holy Ghost is appointed to endure, depends solely on the force of the contested, equivocal word *aionios*, which depends solely for its own force on the nature of the subject to which it is applied. So that, at the very last, we have not got one step forward, in determining the certain duration of future misery.

Mr. S. uses an argument for the endless punishment of the blasphemer against the holy Ghost, which, I think, is extraordinary for a scholar, and a divine. I have sometimes heard old women make use of it ; but did not expect to see it introduced into a grave discourse, by a man of learning.

He says, p. 34. " That these words of our Saviour meant a punishment and misery, which shall never come to an end, may be argued from the gospel scheme of recovery. Those who think that it is a reflection on the sufficiency of Christ's atonement, to suppose any sins unpardonable, ought to consider from whence their unpardonableness doth arise. It is not from the greatness of those sins compared with other sins ; nor for want of sufficiency

ciency in the atonement of Christ. The holy spirit hath his part in the work of salvation, and without his awakening, convincing, sanctifying operation, men will never be saved. They will resist truth and duty, and continue in unholiness."

I desire to know what Mr. S. means by this argument for the eternal never ending misery of some sinners. Our Saviour says, "I and my Father are one." God the Father hath declared and sworn, that he is unwilling that any should perish; but that all should come to repentance. St. Paul hath told us expressly, that God our Saviour will have all men to be saved; and that he hath tasted death for every man. Is it so, that the holy Ghost opposes and obstructs the salvation of some men? Then there is not union in the Godhead, in the great affair of human salvation. If this be not Mr. S.'s meaning, I see no force in his argument. That it is his meaning, I do not affirm.

I have often said that I firmly believe in future punishment of sinners. I have no idea that all men are so wise as to know the things of their peace, and to secure their interest in the next state of being. Some will be found, at the day of general judgment, to be unprepared for virtuous and holy society, and must, therefore, be excluded from it. That this exclusion will, or will not, be absolutely endless, is the grand point in dispute. Mr. S.'s texts show, plainly enough, that there will be future punishment and misery; but this is not the disputable matter.

That

That this punishment and misery will be interminable, they do not prove. So that the important matter in controversy is still undecided, by any passages of scripture Mr. S. hath brought forward.

I should be willing to attend on Mr. S. and to cite every passage he hath produced, at full length, and comment upon them all ; but I am persuaded it can be of no service to the reader.

To give my reader perfect satisfaction, I will cite one whole section from Mr. S., both the scriptures, and his own observations upon them. It is his 10th sec. beginning on p. 36. "*Matt. v. 22. But whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.* Could Christ say this with truth, if he knew that there is no hell fire, and that all men shall be saved ? *Matt. x. 28. Fear not them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul ; but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* 33d. verse. *Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.* Matt. xvi. 25, 26. *For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it ; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose himself.*

In the 18th chapter of Matthew, he describes the fearful end of the unmerciful servant, who hath been forgiven by his Lord, and then says, *so shall my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.* Would the Son of God have given this description, unless
there

there be such an end to which some men come?—
 Matt. xxiii. 13—15. *Woe unto you scribes, pharisees, hypocrites ; for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men ; for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering, to go in. For ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers ; therefore ye shall receive greater damnation ; for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him two fold more a child of hell than yourselves. Verse 33. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell ? Mark viii. 38. Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.—Mark ix. 43—48. If thy hand offend thee, cut it off ; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched : where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. Could Christ have said in more plain words that there is a future punishment prepared for them, who will not part with their favorite sins and lusts ? Mark xvi. 15, 16. Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature ; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be damned —Luke vi. 24. Woe unto you that are rich ; for ye have received your consolation. With what propriety could a woe be pronounced on those who abound in the blessings of this world, or could it be
 said*

said that they have received their consolation, if there be not a state of future misery, where those who have used their riches in a wrong manner, shall be punished?—Luke xiii. 3. *Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.* Can those who are not Christ's disciples be saved? John v. 28, 29. *For the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall bear his voice, and come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation.* John xv. 6. *If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."*

The reader hath now before him one whole sec. of Mr. S.'s book. And there is no passage of scripture in it, that has the least reference to the perpetuity of future misery; except Mark ix. 43—48. "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands, to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Whatever be intended by the fire and the worm, they are truly said the one *never* to be quenched, and the other *never* to die; if the fire continue burning; and the worm live, till they shall have perfectly answered their design, and the will of God be done by them. St. Jude says of Sodom, and Gomorrah, and other cities, that, "giving themselves over to fornication,

U

and

and going after strange flesh, *they* are set for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."

That fire, which was rained down from heaven upon them, burnt till it had consumed them, and therefore St. Jude calls it eternal fire ; because it continued burning till the divine purpose was answered by it ; even the destruction of those cities. So here, our Saviour says, *the fire is not quenched, and the worm dieth not* : they both continue, as the eternal fire of Sodom did, till they effect their design. And we could not reasonably expect that a fire and a worm, which God had prepared for the punishment of wicked men, should be extinguished and die, before they had accomplished their design. The eternal fire of Sodom will be no more heard of in the universe, after she and her daughters shall be restored to the divine favor, and have returned to their first estate, as we are divinely assured they will.

At the close of what Mr. S. hath produced from our Saviour's discourses, he hath the following remarkable assertion, p. 37. "The whole scheme of doctrine taught by Christ, strongly *implies* future and eternal misery." Strange indeed ! that after looking through the four Evangelists, with professed design to find positive proof of eternal, never ending misery, he should be reduced to the necessity at last, to own there was no such proof to be found, and humbly to confess that this idea of eternal misery was only *implied* in our Saviour's scheme of doctrine ! Had there been positive proof of never ending

ing misery in our Saviour's scheme of doctrine, and Mr. S. had been so fortunate as to have found it, who will believe that he would have closed with so humble a confession? Further, does the reader think that, if our blessed Saviour had considered the doctrine of endless misery to be true, he would have left it to be *inferred* from what he taught, and not have expressed it in the most indubitable language? I am persuaded he does not. That glorious personage knew that it was the will of his Father that all men should repent, know the truth, and be saved. He knew that he came to *die for the world*; that the *world through him might be saved*; that he came to *taste death for every man*, and that he himself was *willing that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*. It is not at all strange that he hath, no where, expressly declared the positive eternity of future misery. It would have been acting entirely out of character, and contradicting the great design of his coming into the world.

Leaving the testimony of Christ, Mr. S. proceeds to that of John the Baptist, recorded in Matt. iii. and Luke iii. "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?—And now also the ax is laid at the root of the tree;—therefore every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.—Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

In

repent. We have now got from St. Pet. and from Mr. S. that Christ went in person, or by his spirit, and preached the gospel to the antediluvians, and used the means of grace with them; and that they did not repent.

Now, I wish to ask Mr. S. whether God knew of this preaching, and using the means of grace with the antediluvians? If he did, whether he approved of it? If he knew and approved of it, whether he had not some good end in view, in giving his approbation to this measure? If he had some good end in view, what it was? Was the end, to bring the antediluvians to repentance? The end must have been, either to render them more criminally guilty, or to make them penitent.

We will suppose it was, to make them more criminally guilty. Then the inference is this, that God, the wise, the powerful, the good, the merciful God, the maker of the antediluvians, who knew they would be eternally miserable, when he made them, and who foresaw that they would increase their guilt and aggravate their future misery, by resisting his spirit, and turning a deaf ear to his overtures of grace; yet sent his spirit and gospel to them, with design to render them more criminally guilty, that they might suffer the more! My kind reader, do you believe all this to be true of the wise, good, powerful, and merciful God, who hath sworn that he is unwilling that any should perish? If this cannot be admitted; let us try the other alternative. Then God sent his spirit and gospel to the antediluvians,
with

with express design to bring them to repentance. But he knew, from the days of eternity, that they would not repent. To have had no end in view, and to have one which he knew would never exist, are the same thing. If the antediluvians perish without end, God had no design in view, in sending his spirit and gospel to them, according to the present hypothesis. We are now driven to adopt one of these three alternatives; that God sent his spirit and gospel to the antediluvians, to increase their guilt and eternal damnation; or that he had no end in view; or that the antediluvians will repent. The reader may adopt which of these alternatives he pleases. I shall adopt the last, as infinitely the most rational, the most honourable to God, and the most perfectly consistent with his revealed benevolent government of men.

Thus Mr. S., by quoting St. Peter, as he did by quoting St. John, hath given us one of the best scriptures to comment upon that we have in favor of the salvation of all men, as it undeniably favors the salvation of the old world.

We have already considered a large portion of the 3d chap. of the 2d epistle of St. Peter, and shown the harmony between Peter and John, in their ideas of the new heavens and new earth.

Mr. S. goes from the epistles of St. Peter, to those of St. Paul; and begins his remarks on that to the Romans. Mr. S. takes an extraordinary method with the epistle to the Romans. And it is not difficult

cult to discern the reason of it. He gives us a general statement of what he supposes to be St. Paul's design in this epistle ; and affirms that he was a strong advocate for eternal misery, and for a partial election to eternal life ; but brings forward no particular passages to support this statement, and these affirmations. In this way a man may prove any thing, or, rather will prove nothing. For the consideration of the 5th chapter, he refers us to his 3d part. He mentions the 9th, 10th, and 11th, chapters, as containing a partial election to eternal life, and reprobation of the rest of mankind ; so that some must unavoidably be eternally miserable.

After Mr. S. had made a statement of St. Paul's general system of doctrine, in this epistle he has the following observations, page 51. "Hitherto, a connected view of this epistle, appears to be much against the opinion of universal salvation, and if the apostle had said nothing further, an unattentive reader would gather from his writing, his belief of eternal punishment. The weight of evidence from this epistle remains still to be considered, and is found in the 9th, 10th, and 11th chapters ; where the point is decided with as great plainness as language can do it."

"He takes up the subject of the blindness of his own nation, the Jews ; and their rejection by the sovereignty of God from the benefits of the gospel. His design was to justify the righteousness of God in doing it, and reconcile all the former promises made to that people, with such an event. If part of the
Jews

Jews are eternally rejected by God, the opinion of universal salvation is unfounded ; and part of every other nation may also be forever lost." Here the reader sees what he may expect to find in these three chapters, viz. a rejection of a part of the Jewish nation from eternal life. If this be not found here, then Mr. S. hath been guilty of misrepresenting St. Paul, and of affirming that which is not true. The reader cannot have forgotten yet, how Mr. S. treated the xvii. chapter of John, and that he affirmed that Christ prayed not for the world, in that chapter ; when it was proved, from the very chapter, that he repeatedly prayed for the world, and that the choicest blessing might be conferred on the world, even the knowledge and faith of the Son of God. If it should happen, when we come to a critical examination and analysis of these three chapters of St. Paul's epistle to the Romans, that there is no proof in them that any part of Israel were rejected from eternal happiness, and obliged to be eternally miserable, Mr. S.'s assertion must be unfounded, and he considered as having misrepresented St. Paul.

Rom. ix. 1—5. "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness, and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh : Who are Israelites ; to whom pertaineth the adoption and the glory ; and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises ; Whose

W

are

11. "I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid. But rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy."

I ask then, have Israel stumbled so as finally to fall, and is their present rejection a final one? Far be it. The fact, is, that, through their fall, or present rejection, the Gentiles are admitted into their ancient church state, to excite them to emulation, that they may hereafter be received.

12. "Now, if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?"

If the present fall of a part of the Jews be the occasion of a rich blessing to the Gentile world, and the partial rejection of the ancient church, be the mean of a large accession from the Gentiles; their full return and reception to favor, must be a much richer blessing to the world.

13, 14. "For I speak to you Gentiles, in as much as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office; If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them."

I address myself to the Gentiles, as I am their apostle, I fulfil my apostolic charge. And I wish that, by my fidelity to the Gentiles, I may be a mean of exciting emulation in the breasts of my people, and, in this way, of reclaiming and saving them.

15. "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling

Reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead."

If the partial rejection of the Jews hath been the occasion of reconciling the Jewish and Gentile world; their reception and reunion much more.

16. "For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches."

And a good ground of expectation that the rejected Israelites will be restored, is, that they are still an holy nation, as having proceeded from Abraham, who was the first fruit, and the root.

17, 18. "And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive-tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree: Boast not against the branches: but if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee."

If some of the Jews be rejected, and thou, not holy, nor in covenant with God, art admitted to join the believing Jews, and with them to enjoy church privilege: remember that thou boast not against the rejected Jews, the branches: But if you are so thankless towards God, and so insensible towards Israel, as to boast over them; be sure of this, that you derive all your present privileges from their ancient Rock, the covenant of God with Abraham, their ancestor.

19, 20, 21. "Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well, because

because of unbelief they were broken off; and thou standest by faith. Be not high minded, but fear. For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee."

If you say, that the Jews were rejected, that you might be admitted: be it so. They were rejected because of unbelief, and you were admitted by faith: be not haughty, but humble and fearful. For if God spared not the natural seed of Abraham, you have no reason to think he will spare you, his adopted seed.

22. "Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; But towards thee, goodness; if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise, thou also shalt be cut off."

The goodness, and severity of God are matter of profound admiration! His severity towards the rejected Jews, and his goodness to you, Gentiles; if you continue to conduct worthy of his goodness; if not, you also will be rejected.

23. "And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again."

And these rejected Jews, if they continue not in their unbelief, shall be received into church-estate again; for God is able to restore them.

24. "For if thou wert cut out of the olive-tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive-tree, how much more shall

shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive-tree?"

For if you, gentiles, uncovenanted people, were admitted into church estate; how much more likely is it, that those, who were born in covenant with God, will be readmitted to the enjoyment of their standing in the church?

25, 26. "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, (lest ye should be wise in your own conceits;) that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

For I wish not, brethren, that you should continue ignorant of this mysterious conduct of divine providence, lest you be self-conceited, that the present blindness of Israel is only temporary and will continue no longer than the universal reception of the gospel in the Gentile world: then all Israel shall be restored; as hath been predicted of the Deliverer who should come out of Zion, that he should turn away the ungodliness of Jacob.

27. "For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sin."

For my covenant is still with these rejected Israelites, and their descendants, and I shall take away their sin.

28. "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies

them from his visible church, and introduced the Gentiles.

What shall we say of Mr. S. as an expositor of scripture? I have taken pains, kind reader, for your sake, not my own, to examine every verse of these three chapters. I was as well satisfied before this labor, as I am now. I knew there was not a single word in them that so much as hinted at eternal misery. But as Mr. S. had affirmed that they contained a weight of evidence of eternal misery, I thought it best, on the reader's account, to examine them. Mr. S. may rely upon it, that Universalists will not accept, upon trust, his expositions of scripture. Can it be, that Mr. S. should seriously think, that the three chapters we have reviewed, contained a *weight of evidence* of eternal misery? I will not judge my brother. If he did, it is not a greater mistake than he was guilty of, when he affirmed that sin and misery were the *necessary means of producing the greatest glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy, intelligent kingdom*, and a hundred others in his doctrine of the divine benevolence.

I am absolutely weary of following Mr. S. in his interpretations of scripture. They are so crude and indigested, that I am heart-sick of attending to them.

Before I proceed any farther, I will repeat an observation, which I have already often made, that we have no controversy with those who assert future punishment; and that it will be great, and of long continuance;

tinuance; with many, no doubt, it will continue for *ages of ages*. In all instances, it will be great and durable, in proportion to the guilt and obduracy of sinners, who are punished. That future punishment, or misery, will be eternal, and absolutely without end, is the grand point we contest. And we suppose that such misery is far from being countenanced, either by reason or scripture. To understand clearly and easily the meaning of the phrases, and manner of diction used by the sacred writers, we ought to consider that they were Jews, and adopted the Jewish idiom and phraseology. And the Jews often spoke of things as *everlasting*, and *eternal*, when a long continuance only was really intended. The covenant of circumcision, the ordinance of the passover, the priesthood of Aaron, the hills and mountains were all *everlasting*, and *eternal*, according to the Jewish, full swelling, exaggerated manner of expression. And yet no more was intended, than a temporary, though long continuance. For many of these things have ceased.

When these things are duly considered, together with the abundant positive proof from scripture, which we have produced, that all men will be saved; it will not be difficult to understand the full and swelling language of the New Testament. Especially when it is farther considered, that there is not one single expression in all the New Testament, to set over against these plain unfigured declarations, *that God is not willing that any should perish, but that*

that all should come to repentance ;—That God our Saviour will have all men to be saved ;—that Christ died for the world ;—that he tasted death for every man. All the evidence from scripture, that can be opposed to these positive declarations, is mere inference and deduction, or the swelling figurative language of the Jewish manner of diction.

With these observations in mind, we will endeavor to exercise so much patience, as to accompany Mr. S. a little farther in his expositions of scripture.

Leaving the 5th chap. of Romans, to be considered in the 3d part, he proposes to proceed to St. Paul's other epistles. But here we shall a little invert his order, and call into present view the 5th chap. of the epistle to the Romans.

Following Mr. S. to his 3d. part, we find him introducing his exposition of the 5th. chap. of Romans, thus, p. 232. " Dr. H. and those who are with him in opinion, place great dependance on Rom. v. as evidence in their favor." Perhaps Mr. S. will not permit me to meddle with Rom. v. ; for I solemnly declare that I am not with Dr. H.'s book in opinion. It may be, that the author of that book and I now think alike ; since he may have given up some of his errors, in the clear light of heaven and eternity.

However, I will risk a few brief observations on the 5th. of Rom. after I have taken notice of Mr. S.'s partial manner of treating the scripture. Mr. S. says

says p. 232, "The passage is from the 15th to the 18th verse." Did Mr. S. never see more verses of that chapter quoted by Universalists, than those he has enumerated? or was he loth they should have any more to consider? Pray, my brother, what is it you and I contend for? is it truth, or the mastery? If for truth, why do we not deal fairly, take the whole passage, or chapter, or, at least, as great a portion of any chapter, or book, as speaks of the same matter?

With the liberty of my brother S. I will consider the 12th. verse and all the rest in that chapter.

Rom. v. 12. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

For this reason, that as sin entered into the world by one man, and death as its consequence; and in this way death hath passed upon all men, upon which all have sinned.

13. ("For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.")

Forever after Adam's sin, through all subsequent ages, down to the giving of the law by Moses, sin was in the world: but it is unreasonable to suppose that death came in consequence of any of those sins, which were committed in the world between Adam and Moses, as there was no law in being with the penalty of death annexed to sin.

14. "Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come."

Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, over all his children, who did not sin as he did, so as that death should be the consequence of their sin; for Adam, in introducing *sin* and *death*, was the figure of him that was to come, who should introduce *righteousness* and *life*.

15. "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead; much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace *which* is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many."

But the parallel is not exact between the *offence* and the *free gift*. For if through the offence of one man, *Adam*, all men die; much more the grace of God, and the gracious gift through one man, *Jesus Christ*, hath abounded unto all men.

16. "And not as it was by one that sinned, *so* is the gift; for the judgment *was* by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification."

And further, the *damage* by Adam's offence is not perfectly like the *gift* through Christ; for judgment to condemnation proceeded from one offence of one man, but the free gift proceeds to the forgiveness of all offences, and the justification of all offenders.

181

17. "For, if by one man's offence, death reigned by one ; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ :")

For if by the offence of one death reigned over all men ; much more all men who receive the abounding grace, and the gift which proceeds to forgiveness of all offences, and justification, which was just mentioned, shall reign in life by one, even Jesus Christ.

18. "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation ; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."

The inference, is, that, as by the offence of one judgment unto condemnation was upon all men ; so by the righteousness of one the free gift unto justification of life is unto all men.

19. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners ; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

For, as by the disobedience of one man, Adam, all men were made sinners ; just so, by the obedience of one man, Jesus Christ, shall all men be made righteous.

20. "Moreover, the law entered that the offence might abound ; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

Further still, the law by Moses was given to discover the malignity and evil nature of sin, and to aggravate

aggravate these, if men would still persist in sin; but however abundant or aggravated have been the sins of men, grace hath abounded beyond the number and aggravation of them all.

21. "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."

The final conclusion of all is, that, as sin hath reigned unto death over all men, so grace might reign over all men, through righteousness and holiness, unto eternal, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

If this passage of scripture were to be considered by an unprejudiced judicious mind, I am not at all at a loss, what his judgment would be of St. Paul's opinion with regard to the universal salvation. Every verse in the whole passage contains the idea clearly. In several of the verses, it is expressed in so many words. The 18th and 19th verses, though they perfectly contain the same idea with all the rest, express it a little more plainly.

18, 19. "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon *all men* to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon *all men* unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience *many* were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall *many* be made righteous."

I cannot but take notice of some of Mr. S.'s observations upon this passage of scripture. In p. 233, he says, "It hath been sufficiently shown already,

already, that the phrase *all men*, neither in the scriptural nor common use, necessarily means all the individuals of the human race ; but is very often applied to numerous classes and bodies of men, not meaning the whole of mankind."

If we should allow this remark to be just, what then ? Will it necessarily follow that, when St. Paul uses the phrase *all men*, it means only some *numerous class* or *body* of men, and not all the individuals of the human race ? let us try the experiment with St. Paul's language in the 18th and 19th verses of the 5th chapter of his epistle to the Romans.

18, 19. " Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon the *Jews* to condemnation ; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon the *Jews* to justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience the *Jews* were made sinners ; so by the obedience of one shall the *Jews* be made righteous."

A man of half common sense, and one dram of honesty of heart, would readily see, and frankly own, that St. Paul must mean the same by *all men*, in one part of the verse, that he does in the other. And what is the inference from the reading we have given the verses, in compliance with Mr. S.'s remark ? The *Jews*, most certainly, are all saved. This Mr. S. cannot deny. And what becomes of the rest of mankind, of the whole Gentile world ? St. Paul tells us, that *sin entered into the world by one man*. The Gentile world then have never known sin, they

they are all holy and righteous. They will, therefore, certainly, all be saved. So that universal salvation is most permanently founded on a scheme of Mr. S.'s own fabrication.

It does not avail for Mr. S. or any other man, to attempt to take St. Paul's writings out of the hands of those pernicious errorists, the Universalists. For common sense will always be able to reduce any observations they shall make for this purpose, to the grossest absurdity. They had better quietly agree to resign these writings to the Universalists, or to demonstrate to the world that they are interpolated. To explain them, so as to make them speak in favor of eternal misery, they cannot.

Mr. S.'s next observation is, p. 233, "It must be supposed that St. Paul is consistent with himself in his writings. In the first part of this work, I have taken a general view of all his canonical writings, and particularly of his epistle to the Romans, from which this passage is taken; and collected a great number of places, in which future and eternal punishment is asserted in the most express terms."

One side of the grand question is, that all men will be saved. The other side is, that some men will not be saved. How is it proved that some men will not be saved? Plainly, by proving that the future punishment, which it is conceded on all hands, that some will suffer, will be endless.

This

This proof must come from reason, or scripture, or both. If from scripture, it will be expressed, or implied. If expressed, it will be in plain, unequivocal language. If implied, the manner of expression will be such as to communicate the ideas intelligibly, to every intelligent, attentive reader. A thing is not expressed, if doubt and uncertainty attend the mode of expression.

As to the salvation of all men, we say the scripture *expresses*, because it asserts it in plain unequivocal terms, and in so many words.

"God, our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved."—"For as by one man's disobedience *many* were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall *many* be made righteous."

We say these passages *express*, because they assert the salvation of all men in so many words.

Mr. S. affirms that he has *collected a great number of places, in which future and eternal punishment is asserted in the most express terms*. If he has made such a collection from St. Paul's writings, he secretes it, from the public, at least, it is not in the book in which he affirms he has made the collection. He may have given it to the public in some other book.

There is but one single expression, in all those passages which he hath cited from St. Paul, that gives any idea of the *continuance* of future punishment. If what I now affirm is true, Mr. S.'s affirmation cannot be true. That what I affirm is true, any one may satisfy himself, by looking over the passages which

which Mr. S. hath produced from St. Paul's writings.

What I affirm is this, that but one single word can be found, in all the passages which Mr. S. cites from St. Paul's writings, that speaks of the *continuance* of future punishment. And what does not speak of the continuance, certainly does not speak of the eternity, of future punishment. That one word which I refer to, is in a passage cited from 2^d Thes. i. 6—10. "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with *everlasting destruction, olethron aioonion*, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." The reader hath already seen the reasons why the word *aioonion* cannot be admitted to signify perpetuity without end, unless the nature and circumstances of the subject require it; which is not the present case.

Scriptures, if there were such, as only imply that future punishment will be without end, cannot be said to *assert it in the most express terms*. Mr. S. was a little too eager, too full of the idea of eternal misery. He did not mean to write falsehood. He saw several texts that spoke of future punishment, and he instantly added the epithet *eternal*, in his own mind,

mind, and finally put it down on paper. I am persuaded this is the way in which his unlucky assertion came abroad.

Another observation of Mr. S. is, p. 234, "If we were reduced to the alternative, either of saying this passage means universal salvation; or of saying, we know nothing of its meaning, the last must be chosen to preserve any consistency in the writings of this apostle." What if I should propose some alternatives respecting St. Paul's writings? Either St. Paul means universal salvation in this 5th chapter to the Romans: or he means that which is directly contrary to what he affirmed, when he said, *for he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.*—Contrary also to what he affirmed, when he said, *AND so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, When I shall take away their sins.*—Contrary also to his own most express assertion, when he said, *For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell. And (having made peace through the blood of his cross) by him to reconcile all things to himself, by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.*—Contrary to his own assertion, when he said, *And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body, by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.*—Contrary to what he affirmed, when he said, *having made known unto us*

the mystery of his will, according unto his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself, that, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.—Contrary also to what he affirmed in his solemn apostolical directions to Timothy, in these words, *I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*—I am positive, we had much better own that St. Paul means universal salvation, in this 5th chapter to the Romans, than to present him to the world as the most inconsistent and self-contradictory writer that ever drew a pen.

We will now return from the third to the first part of Mr. S.'s book, and pursue his scripture proofs of eternal misery. I am thus patient and punctual in the examination of Mr. S.'s proof from scripture of eternal misery, because I view the passages of scripture which he adduces in support of his own scheme, as scripture objections against universal salvation; though nothing but Mr. S.'s use of them would ever have suggested to my mind that they were so.

Mr.

Mr. S. proceeds next to St. Paul's epistles to the Corinthians. . . . And his first extract is from the 1st chapter of the 1st epistle, verses 18, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. But we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound those which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are."

Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise, mighty or noble are called, &c. Upon this Mr. S. makes the following observation, p. 57. "What is meant by *calling* in this place? It is conceived, that it means effectual calling to eternal life, by sanctification of the holy spirit." From this idea of *calling* Mr. S. would infer, that all the inhabitants of Corinth, who were not *called*, were eternally miserable; as we see he does, p. 59. If *calling* in this place means effectual calling, and I do not know how we can put any other construction upon the word, consistent

consistent with what is fact ; then the apostle's description is proof enough, that some men will not be saved ; for those cannot be saved, who are not effectually called." Even on Mr. S.'s hypothesis, that *calling* in this place means *effectual* calling. Mr. S. is taking for granted the very thing in dispute, that the punishment of those, who neglect the call of the Gospel, in this life, will be without end. That it will be endless, is the matter of controversy, and ought not to be assumed in the argument. If eternal misery be to be proved by such a circuitous and uncertain method, and Mr. S. be the man who is finally to convince the Universalists, he will need to protract his life, to the longest period which any antediluvian ever reached. The Universalists have so many plain, express, indubitable passages, both of Old and New Testament scriptures, in their favor ; that it will require a long time to convince them that they are in an error, by inferences and deductions from equivocal passages, aided by dubious reasonings.

But, though it be not pertinent to the present subject, we will, for a minute examine Mr. S.'s idea of the *called*, as used by St. Paul in this epistle. And as good a method as any we can adopt, is to permit the apostle to explain his own term.

In the 2d verse of this first chapter of St. Paul's first epistle to the church at Corinth, the apostle explains the term *called*, and the general character of that church, " Unto the church of God which is
at

at Corinth, to them that are sanctified," or separated, devoted to the christian profession, as it follows, "called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, both theirs and ours." Here the apostle, in a manner, plain enough to be understood by any common capacity, explains the term *called*; and shows us that he applies the term to all the professors of Christianity at Corinth and elsewhere, who were obliged, by their profession, to be saints.

If we suppose, as Mr. S. does, that the term *called* means *effectual calling, by sanctification of the holy spirit*, we shall presently make very wild work. Let us, with Mr. S.'s hypothesis in mind, look a little forward, and see how these *effectually called* conducted themselves. We shall soon find that one of these *effectually called, by the sanctification of the holy spirit*, according to Mr. S. married his father's wife, and that the church in general conducted very indecently on the occasion. Chapter v. 1—5. "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed: In the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together,

together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such a one to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." It is not much in favor of Mr. S.'s notion of the term *called*, that one, of the *called* should be guilty of such fornication as was totally unknown in the Gentile world, and, for it, be solemnly delivered over to the devil; and that the whole church should rather favor the guilty wretch. Nor was it any more in character for that church that they afterwards turned the holy communion of the supper of our Lord, into a gluttonous drunken feast.

It will not help the argument of Mr. S. if he should say, that it is not supposed that every individual member of the church at Corinth was sanctified by the holy spirit: and that this incestuous brother was unsanctified, a reprobate, and therefore will be eternally miserable. It happens that we have St. Paul's express testimony in favor of the incestuous person's future happiness. He was to be delivered to Satan *for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus*. So that, if Mr. S. can prove, that it will fare as well with the rest of that church, in the day of the Lord Jesus, as we have reason to think it will with their incestuous brother, we may be quite certain of the salvation of the whole church of Corinth.

How indigested and incorrect appears Mr. S.'s exposition of this passage of scripture! As imperfect have

have been his observations, in general, on our Saviour's and St. Paul's writings, so far as we have gone. He brings no express scripture in favor of eternal misery, or that affords any material objection against universal salvation. And as for his interpretations of scripture, they uniformly appear to have been hasty, unstudied; and are, generally, as we have seen, either converted against himself, or reduced to absurdity.

Never was there a book printed in America, so favorable to the cause of Universalism, as this of Mr. S. except that of Dr. Edwards; which we shall presently have under examination.

Dr. Chauncy did well, according to his ability. But his ability to support universalism, in a *direct* way, was not equal to that of Mr. S. or Dr. Edwards, when exerted in the *indirect* way; that of attempting to prove the doctrine of eternal misery. Mr. S. and Dr. Edwards are preachers of Christianity. Both gentlemen of learning; of maturity of reading, reflection, and judgment; and both cordially engaged in the cause of eternal misery. If they fail, or do much worse than fail, as is strongly suspected they must; all the writers in favor of Universalism, in this country, never rendered the cause such essential service, as they will. Great is the truth, and it will prevail!

Mr. S.'s next passage is, 1 Cor. ix. 24—27. "Know ye not that they, who run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain."

tain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible. Therefore so run, not as uncertainly ; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air ; but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection ; lest that by any means, when I have preached unto others, I myself should be a castaway."

Mr. S.'s immediate observation is this, "None will dispute, that eternal happiness and life are the gospel prize ; and could such an exhortation as this have been proper, if all men are absolutely to obtain it ?" Why not ? If christians do not conduct so as to obtain the prize in this state of existence, the next will unavoidably be miserable. Hell, the lake of fire, will convince christians, who shall be cast into it, that there was an infinite propriety in this exhortation of the apostle, and others of the like kind in the scriptures ; even though they knew that they should finally emerge out of the place of misery. We have no very positive assurance, that any will rise from the second death, to happy life, till the expiration of the Millennium. And is there no propriety in exhorting christians to conduct in such manner, in this life, as to avoid being cast into the lake of fire for a thousand years ? No christian ever seriously believed that there will be no future misery ; or that none will be sentenced, hereafter, by the eternal judge, to *depart into outer darkness, where will be weeping and gnashing of teeth*. I am, sometimes,

times, at a loss to understand Mr. S. I am sure he might have delivered himself with more distinctness and perspicuity. Future punishment, and eternal punishment, are two very different things, with those whom he calls Universalists. He ought to have made, and maintained, through his whole piece, a clear distinction between these two kinds of punishment. He has produced a number of scriptures which speak plainly enough of future punishment; but not one passage, as I think, that speaks of eternal never ending punishment.

The next passage is, 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16. "For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life." By *perishing*, Mr. S. does not suppose that extinction of being is intended; but eternal misery. I wonder the absurdity of such a supposition did not strike his mind. Eternal death, eternal destruction, an eternal perishing, are all contradictions, and absurdities.

Mr. S. has the same observation over again, that he formerly applied to the antediluvians.

Page 61. "If they be lost, a *savor of death unto death*, that is, their rejection of the gospel will increase their sin and misery, and make their eternal wretchedness more awful, than it would have been without gospel light." Here is a most shocking representation of the divine character. I will try to

rescue the divine character from this false and foul aspersions.

God knew that some would be eternally miserable ; and that the gospel would be an occasion of increasing the quantity of that misery. God expressly sent the gospel to them, when he commanded that it should be preached to *every creature*. God himself then, hath expressly presented men with the occasion of increasing their eternal misery. He either intended to increase their misery, or he did not. If he did not intend to increase their misery, an event hath happened which he foresaw, but did not intend, which event he himself occasioned. If so, then an event hath happened, which God himself occasioned, but did not intend should happen. But to occasion an event, and not intend the existence of that event, is absurd. God, therefore, intended to increase the eternal misery of some men, by sending the gospel among them. Then certainly he could have no view to their personal good, in sending the gospel among them.

Now let us see, my kind reader, how all this conflicts with scripture. God said, in Ezek. "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked."—But to send the gospel among them, is to occasion their aggravated death. Then God does that which produces an effect, in which he hath no pleasure. Which is the same thing, as to do that in which he hath no pleasure. Which is a shocking absurdity. Again, God says,

as the prophet represents him, *Turn ye, turn ye ; for why will ye die, O house of Israel !* At the same time, God knows they will die. He intends their death. Yea, he is doing that which he intends shall be an aggravation of their eternal death.

Now, my reader, if your neighbor not only knew you were presently to fall into a labyrinth of misery and wretchedness ; but intended you should ; and were continually endeavoring to increase your misery and wretchedness ; and yet if this neighbor should declare to you that he had no pleasure in your misery ; and urge you to avoid it ; would you consider him as your friend ? or, rather would you not look on him as your falsest, foulest, and most cruel enemy ? and can you consider this as the true and real character of your God ? It absolutely is his real character, if Mr. S.'s hypothesis is true, that the gospel, sent by God, makes the eternal wretchedness of some men more awful. How then can we avoid falling into this absurdity and blasphemy ? The gospel is sent of God to all men. And it does aggravate their guilt and misery, if any of them reject it. And God knows they will reject it. The answer is easy and simple ; give up the false absurd idea of eternal misery. Then there is no difficulty in the case. God knows that some men will resist the methods of grace, for a time ; and that this resistance will aggravate their guilt and misery. But he knows at the same time, that all this is needful for them ; and will prove, in the end, to be a salutary discipline to them.

them. That sin and misery are the necessary means of producing the greatest good, or the highest glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom, we have seen to be false, and replete with absurdity and blasphemy. If God send the gospel to any person, or people, this is a demonstration that he designs the virtue and happiness of that person or people. Another text Mr. S. produces, is, ad Cor. v. 10, 11. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terrors of the Lord we persuade men."

"Here," Mr. S. observes, "is a promise of the day of judgment, when we must be rewarded according to our character and practice in life." If this observation be just, that our future reward of misery, will be *according to our character and practice in life*, it is an argument of great validity against eternal misery. By being rewarded *according* to our character and practice in life, is meant, that we shall be punished, if found to be vicious at the day of judgment, in exact proportion to our guilt and demerit. Eternity will not admit of any such proportion. Thousands, perhaps millions, will be found, in the great day of judgment, to have died out of this world, after having committed one single sin, after they had arrived at a state of moral agency. These, most certainly, had contracted no habit of vice, their natures had not suffered but a very small degree of depravity;

ty; only what was induced upon them by the commission of one single crime. Can an eternal state of suffering be considered as justly proportionate to this one single crime? Besides, it is very considerable, in this case, that a happy eternity is lost. So that the reward of one single crime amounts to an eternity of misery, and the loss of an eternity of happiness. Can we respect that government as just and righteous, which inflicts such a punishment on one single temporary crime?

This text of scripture, therefore, instead of favoring, directly opposes and contradicts Mr. S.'s hypothesis of eternal misery.

Mr. S. next proceeds to St. Paul's epistle to the Philippians, and quotes Chap. i. 28, and Chap. iii. 18, 19. "And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation. For many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ; whose end is destruction."

Mr. S. has a remarkable observation upon this passage of scripture, p. 62. "Some men are enemies of the cross of Christ, which is proved by their bad conversation, *whose end is destruction*; and if their end, or the last state in which they are found be destruction, there can be no following salvation; for there can be no other state after the end or last state of any thing." I should have supposed that a very different method of reasoning ought to have been instituted

instituted in this case. *Sin is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be;* this is the language of the same apostle. Now this same apostle tells us that Christ will destroy every enemy. Sin will then be destroyed. And, in this passage, which Mr. S. has quoted, he tells us that the sinner also shall be destroyed. Mr. S.'s inference is, that, if the sinner be destroyed, he cannot be saved. My inference from the destruction of sin and of the sinner, both which St. Paul affirms will be, is this, that the sinner will be saved. There can be but two ways of destroying a sinner, that I know of. One, to destroy his existence, as a creature of God. The other, to render him a willing, obedient member of God's moral government. Mr. S. will say, that a state of eternal misery is the destruction of the sinner. This would be taking the very thing for granted, which he is laboring to prove. That Christ came to *make an end of sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness*; is not the language of Daniel only, but of all the sacred writers, who speak of his office and business on earth. Sin is no otherwise destroyed, but by being extinguished out of the universe of God. If any sacred writer had said, that Christ came to punish sin with eternal misery; we should be under obligations to believe it, however unaccountable it might appear. But as this is not the fact; and, as we are most expressly informed, by both Old and New Testament writers, that the great design of Christ's coming into the world

world was, that he might put an end to sin, and destroy it ; we are bound to believe it ; and to expect and rejoice in that happy period, when sin shall be banished from the universe of God.

When Christ shall have effected the design of his coming into the world, the destruction of sin, there will be no opposition left to the moral government of God ; sin, or moral evil, being the only thing that ever did oppose it. And, when moral evil shall be extinguished, natural evil can no longer exist. And, when sin and suffering are thus extinct, all things will return into their natural course and order, and harmony and happiness will be universally restored. Thus the pernicious errorists, the Universalists, reason.

When, however, Mr. S. shall prove, that the destruction of sin is its eternal punishment ; and the destruction of the sinner is his eternal misery ; we will submit. But scriptures which speak of the destruction of sin, and of the sinner, whilst they are stark nought for Mr. S. are a firm and sure support to the doctrine of universal salvation.

Mr. S. next refers to St. Paul's epistles to the Thessalonians. He says, that "from chapter iv. 13, to chapter v. 4," of the first epistle, "The apostle gives a description of the day of judgment." He expressly cites only chapter v. 1—4, of the first epistle. "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh

cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief."

What if it be allowed, that St. Paul is here speaking of the day of judgment? it is an excellent passage of scripture, in favor of the destruction of sinners. And if sinners *shall not escape*, we are only the more certain of their salvation. For if sin and sinners, shall certainly be destroyed, then we are certain that the blessed era will commence, when sin and sinners shall be no more. And, as there is no way revealed, in which the sinner will be destroyed, but by being subdued to a voluntary and cheerful submission, at the feet of Jesus, to the moral government of God; we long, and wish, and pray, that the blessed period may advance, when this universal destruction of sinners shall be effected; even though it will, in millions of instances, be wrought by suffering a second death.

The next passage is one we have already considered, when we expounded the v. chapter of the epistle to the Romans. It is 2Thes. i. 6—10, the only passage, in all St. Paul's writings which Mr. S. has adduced, where the apostle speaks of the duration of future punishment. But I need to say no more upon it; as no passage of scripture can ever be admitted, as valid proof of endless punishment, when that

proof

proof depends on the meaning of the word *aisōn* or *aisōnios*, since they are known to be equivocal words.

From the epistles to the Thessalonians, Mr. S. returns to the epistle to the Galatians, and cites a part of the 21 verse of the v. chapter, where, after he had enumerated several vices, which he calls fruits of the flesh, the apostle closes thus, "as I have often told you in time past, that they which do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God." But those, who are now unworthy of the kingdom of God, may hereafter be worthy.

From the epistle to the Galatians, Mr. S. goes on to the epistle to the Ephesians. Mr. S. undertakes to tell us what was St. Paul's design in this epistle to the Ephesians.

One part of his design, according to Mr. S. was to show that it was intended to unite Jews and Gentiles in one holy communion, and to destroy all the prejudices that formerly were in Jewish breasts against such a union. This, he tells us, is the mystery meant in Rom. xi. 25. xvi. 25. Col. i. 26, 27. Chap. ii. 2. Mr. S. goes on to say, p. 66, "One chief purpose of the epistle to the Ephesians, was to enlighten men in this subject, and teach them that Jesus Christ is the head of all holy intelligences, in the universal kingdom of God. Of Gentiles as well as Jews; of Angels as well as Gentiles; and that the whole holy church, of whatever rank or order of existence, would be gathered together as one

in him. This is the mystery meant in Eph. i. 9. iii. 3, 4. A view of this design in the epistle, explains the universality of many expressions which are used in it. Such as this; *That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.* Chap. i. 10. The subject," Mr. S. further adds, "must explain the universality of expression; and the subject is the gathering of all holy creatures under one head; and not the gathering of all sinners into heaven."

No rational, consistent man ever thought of *gathering sinners into heaven*, whilst they remain sinners and unholy. The grand thing contended for is that the time will come when, according to the glorious plan of redeeming and saving love, the whole race of Adam will be restored to virtue and holiness, and, in this way, to heaven and happiness. And this is the thing which Mr. S. ought to have kept constantly in view, and to have directed all his scripture proof against this proposition only.

We shall take the liberty to cite the whole passage, in the 1st chap. of Ephe. to which Mr. S. refers.

Ephe. i. 9, 10. "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him."

Is

In the dispensation of the fulness of times. St. Paul, in his epistle to the Galatians, chap. iv. 4, speaking of the coming of Christ, says, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son." So here, *in the dispensation, economy, or administration of times*; meaning the times that are in the hands of Christ, as mediator; the whole term of time for which the Father gave him *all power in heaven and in earth*. In this, or during this term of the administration of mediatorial power and authority, *this mystery of the divine will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself, shall be accomplished, and all things in heaven and earth shall be gathered together in or by Christ. To gather together in one*, for all these words there is but one in Greek, *anakephalaiooasthai*, which signifies to *head again or rehead or reduce into one sum, or whole*, a number of scattered and disunited parts. The apostle could not easily have selected a word from the Greek language, which would more fully have communicated his idea than this.

This apostle, ever full of the great idea of a universal restoration by Christ, hath used a variety of terms very expressive of his meaning, but never one which gave a more lively idea of it, than this.

By the introduction of moral, every species of natural, evil was introduced. Things in the air, or atmosphere, or aerial heaven, as well as on earth, fell into disorder and wild confusion. The beasts, and birds, and fish of the sea, the air and elements, all
 seemed

eternally triumph in his success and in his share of dominion with God, over a great part of the human race ; I cannot think he would have so highly magnified the riches of Christ. *And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery.* Why all men when but a few are concerned in that *mystery* ; or, at most, but a part of them ? This *mystery* is said to have been bid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.

How happily does the idea of the *creation* of all things by Jesus Christ, agree with the *restoration* of all things by him ? but how illy with a partial restoration ?

And what must have been the feelings of that exalted personage, when, on the theatre of the universe, in the open view of angels, and perhaps of innumerable other intellectual worlds, he bled, and groaned, and died, on mount Calvary, to rescue only some of human kind from the power of satan, sin, and death ; leaving the rest bound in adamantine chains under his dominion, and in eternal darkness and despair ! !

To the intent that now, unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God. Does it redound so much to the glory of divine wisdom, so to project and manage a system of creation and moral government of men, as to be obliged, after the utmost efforts to the contrary, to leave one half of mankind, in the vassalage of satan, that it is worth while

while to reveal it to more worlds than one? it appears to me, that the whole mediatorial plan upon such a hypothesis, were much better secreted and kept, if possible, from universal inspection.

Mr. S. next proceeds to the epistle to the Colossians, and cites only chap. iii. 6: "For which things sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience." No man denies that the disobedient are exposed to the due reward of their deeds, which sooner or later, they must receive, unless intervening repentance prevent.

Since Mr. S. hath omitted it, we must quote a passage of this epistle, and offer some brief comment upon it. It is in chap. i. 12—20.

12. "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

Giving thanks unto God the Father, who hath provided a mediatorial plan of grace, in the execution of which, we are preparing for the inheritance of the saints in the bright and glorious world.

13. "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."

Who hath delivered us from our dark and heathenish state, and introduced us into the kingdom of light and grace, which is in the hands, and under the direction, of his beloved Son, the Mediator.

14. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

By

By whom we obtain redemption, through his passion on the cross, even the remission of all our sins.

15. "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature."

Who is a glorious resemblance of the invisible God, being the first and most eminent of all created beings.

16. "For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him."

For this was the person by whom all things in heaven and earth, with all the ranks and orders of intellectual beings, were created; and they were not only created by him, but are all under his government, and subservient to his designs.

17. "And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."

And he is before all things, both in time and eminence; and by his supporting hand the universe is sustained.

18. "And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence."

And he is the head and king of Zion, the church; who is also the first, as he first arose from the dead;
and

and therefore, in all respects, he ought to have the preeminence over all created beings and things.

19. "For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell."

For it pleased the Father, that, in his adored Son, all fulness of wisdom and power, of gifts and graces, should dwell, to be by him communicated for the benefit of the sinful race of man.

20. "And (having made peace through the blood of his cross) by him, to reconcile all things unto himself; by him I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."

And by him, Jesus Christ, having laid the foundation for peace, by his obedient submission unto death, to reconcile unto himself, the Father, all men and things on earth, and all things in the regions of the heavens that encircle the earth.

This passage, and that in Ephesians, which we have already considered, convey as clear and full ideas of a universal restoration of all men and things, in the heavens, and on the earth, as language can communicate. All men are to be restored to virtue and happiness, and every disorder, introduced by sin, to be rectified; and all things to be brought back to their pristine state of purity and rectitude, and restored to the favor of God, the father of all.

Now it is very easy to discern the reason, why Mr. S. so slightly looked over these two epistles of St. Paul, that to Ephesians, and this to the Colossians.

Mr. S. proceeds to the epistle to the Hebrews,

D d

and

and quotes several passages from it. We will attend to them all.

The first he cites, which he intends as proof of eternal misery, is, chap. vi. 4, 6, 7, 8. "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the holy Ghost ;"—Mr. S. omits the 5th verse, but we will recite it. Verse 5. "And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance : seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. For the earth, which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God : but that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing ; whose end is to be burned." Allow this to be the end of apostates, that they shall be cast into the fire and burned. This, we doubt not, will be the unhappy fate of millions of millions of mankind.

St. John tells us plainly, that, at the close of the general judgment, all, whose names are not found in the Lamb's book of life, shall be cast into the lake of fire ; and that the numbers of these unhappy wretches shall be so great, as that *death* and *hell* will be cast into the lake of fire ; death and *bades*, or death, and the whole invisible state of the dead, will disgorge all that died and were deposited there, and

all shall be cast into the lake of fire, who will not be accepted of the judge. These St. John tells us, shall not live again, till the thousand years, of the binding of Satan, and the saints' reign with Christ in the new heavens and earth, shall be finished.

It is not pertinent to the present subject, to enquire what is really meant by its being *impossible* to renew them again to repentance. I have no doubt that it is a proverbial expression, and means the same kind of impossibility with that of the prophet Jeremiah, chap. xiii. 23. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his spots; then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil."

It is very difficult, and next of kin to a natural impossibility, either to renew the apostates to repentance, or to reform those who have long accustomed themselves to do evil.

But as this is not at all to our purpose, I have need to say no more about it in this place.

The next passage in this epistle is chap. x. 26—31. "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversary. He that despised Moses's law died without mercy under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified

an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace. For we know him that hath said, vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, the Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

The meaning of the 26th verse, above quoted, is plainly this, if, after we have been led to the knowledge of the way of pardon of sin, and reconciliation through Jesus Christ, we give up our faith in Christianity, and our expectations from Jesus Christ, and pursue vicious courses in direct violation of the precepts of Christianity; there is no way for our restoration, whilst we continue in this state of mind, as there is no other sacrifice for sin, but that of Jesus Christ. Continuing in this moral state, we can expect no other, than to be devoured with the adversaries of God.

Mr. S. quotes one passage more from this epistle to the Hebrews, chap. xii. 15. 17. "Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up, trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. Verse 25. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For, if they escaped not that refused him that spake on earth, much

much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.

Though there be nothing in this passage which is, in the least degree, opposed to universal salvation; yet, as there is a very mistaken use of the instance of Esau, in Mr. S.'s application of the passage, I consider myself, as in duty bound, not to let a wrong interpretation of scripture pass unnoticed.

Mr. S. asks, "Can those be saved to whom there is no place for repentance?" If Mr. S. had demonstrated that it was *eternal life*, which Esau sold to his brother Jacob, and which he afterwards sought to regain but could not; and that he certainly will not obtain it of God, because he did not succeed with his father Isaac; he might have had some more color of reason for his question.

The story of the purchase which Jacob made of his brother Esau's birthright, is told in Gen. xxv. 29—34. "And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint. And Esau said to Jacob, feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die; and what profit shall this birthright do me? and Jacob said, swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright."

It

monstrated. This great absurdity originates from a wrong and mistaken place, which Mr. S. and others give to the millennial state of the church. They place it before, whereas it is not to be looked for till after the general judgment.

Why does Mr. S. take for granted, that the day of general judgment will *end the probationary state of mankind, and place them all in happiness or misery eternal*? This assertion, if true, is capable of proof. And Mr. S. knew, or ought to have known, that it was material in the present controversy, and denied by Universalists. He certainly was not at liberty to assume such a proposition without proof. St. John not only speaks of a first resurrection, which gives us good reason to expect a second of the same kind, to happy life; but he tells us also that, after this first resurrection to happy life, the rest of the dead lived not again, a happy life, till the thousand years were finished. These things considered, we have abundant reason to expect a second resurrection to happy life, from the second death. As we have already considered this passage of St. John, we shall not repeat what hath been said.

We must take some notice of Mr. S.'s closing observations, after having finished his proof of eternal torment from the New Testament scriptures. P. 78. "We have considered the writers of the New Testament, and the respective testimony they give to the doctrine of eternal punishment. The testimony of Jesus Christ alone, ought to be esteemed sufficient; for

for he is the omniscient God ; the government of the world is in his hands ; and he is to be the final judge of the state of men. The eternal punishment of part of mankind, and exhortations founded upon the danger of coming to that awful end, are often introduced in the discourses of Jesus ; and he seemed to consider, a plain warning of these truths, to be a principal part of his business as a teacher of religion. We have also examined all the other writers of the New Testament, and found them explicit in describing the same scheme of divine government, and the same end to the probationary state of men, as their divine master before them had taught ; and their testimony of a future punishment, is not deduced from obscure intimations and far fetched consequences from other doctrines ; but asserted in the most plain language, and used as an argument to receive and observe other doctrines ; instead of being obscurely founded on them. And it does not appear, that Jesus Christ and his apostles could have told this truth, in terms more plain, than those which they have used."

The public now has Mr. S.'s New Testament proof of eternal misery. It also has my examination of that proof. If I should contradict all that Mr. S. hath said above, concerning the testimony of our Saviour and his apostles, it would not be a mean of enlightening the public mind, or of bringing it to a clear discernment of truth. And, as truth is my object, I shall not undertake that, which is, in itself,

F f

disagreeable,

disagreeable, when it cannot tend to convey light, and subserve the cause of truth.

I shall content myself with a few observations.

We began our examination of Mr. S.'s New Testament proof of eternal misery, where he began that proof, at the xvii. chapter of St. John.

The reader, if he be pleased to review it, may see how that passage of scripture was treated, both by Mr. S. and me. And I most cheerfully submit the merit of the treatment that scripture hath received, from us both, to the impartial public. There has been so much plainly written, in English, concerning the meaning of the original Greek words, which our translators have rendered *everlasting*, *eternal*, *for ever*, and *for ever and ever*; that every honest, though illiterate, reader, is now capable of judging concerning the import of such language; and of determining that the nature of the subject must limit, or extend, the duration intended, whenever those words are used.

As to the writings of St. Paul, which compose so great a part of the New Testament scriptures; I wish the reader would review the observations on these writings; and, whilst he is doing this, it will be easy for him to compare Mr. S.'s superficial and summary method of treating the epistle to the Romans, those to the Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, and his entire omission of his two epistles to Timothy, with the method in which I have examin-

ed.

all them. And I shall rest satisfied with the impartial decision of the reader.

The reader will also ever bear in mind the great difference there is between *future* and *eternal* misery. Mr. S. hath produced sufficient evidence of *future* misery, from the New Testament scriptures; but it is with the reader, to judge of the pertinency and validity of his evidence, when directed to the point of *eternal* misery.

The last observation which Mr. S. makes, in his recapitulation, I desire to make some remarks upon. It is this, *And it does not appear, that Christ and his apostles could have told this truth, in terms more plain than those which they have used.* If Christ was the *omniscient God*, as Mr. S. calls him, he certainly foresaw that *eternal misery* would be a subject of critical discussion and controversy in the church. If he had considered *eternal misery* as a part of the divine scheme of creation and moral government he would have communicated the sacred truth in terms that would not have admitted of dispute.

When the priesthood of Christ is spoken of, and a strict eternity is intended, the sacred writer easily found a Greek word which perfectly answered his purpose.

Heb. vii. 16. "Who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an *endless life*." Of the righteous, it is said, Luke xx. 36. "Neither can they die any more."

If our Saviour had annexed the word *akataleiton*

to

to the future punishment of the wicked, instead of *eternity*, the point would have been determined, there could have been no dispute. Or, if St. John, when speaking of the *wicked dead*, instead of saying, *they shall not live again, till the thousand years are finished*, had said *they shall live no more*; as it is said of the righteous, *that they cannot die any more*; all dispute would have been foreclosed. So that the observation of Mr. S. *that Christ and his apostles could not have told this truth, in terms more plain, than those which they used*; is not true. The Greek language is not so barren, as to afford no word that signifies an interminable duration; nor was our Saviour deficient in the knowledge of it.

St. Paul, when speaking of the resurrection of the righteous, and of the constitution, and temperature of their bodies, could easily find language that clearly and indisputably conveys the idea of duration without end. 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54. "For this corruptible must put on *incorruption*, and this mortal must put on *immortality*. So when this corruptible shall have put on *incorruption*, and this mortal shall have put on *immortality*, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." How comes it to be expressly said of the righteous, that they *cannot die any more*, and that their bodies shall be rendered *immortal*, and *incorruptible*, if there be no plainer, or more definite language, than that which is used by our Saviour and his apostles, when they speak of the future misery?

Mr.

Mr. S. certainly knew when he advanced the position, that *it does not appear, that Christ and his apostles could have told this truth, in terms more plain, than those which they have used*, that it would be taken notice of, and fall under critical examination. And it seems hard to suppose that he could think it would bear the test of such an examination. Truth only will bear to be thus examined. I have already produced the text, in which it is said of the righteous, that *they cannot die any more*; and also that their bodies, after the resurrection, shall be *immortal, and incorruptible*. St. Paul, speaking of the crown for which Christians contend, calls it incorruptible. 1 Cor. ix. 25. "They do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an *incorruptible*."

Here is a number of Greek words which plainly and indisputably signify duration without end. Such words, justly translated, are *incorruptible, incorruptibility, undefiled, unfading*. If any words, as unequivocal in their meaning as these, had been used with regard to the future misery of the wicked, we should have been much more at a loss, than we now are, how to reconcile the termination of future misery, with the scripture account of that misery. But when words, so equivocal in their meaning, as *aion* and *aionios* truly are, are found annexed to the future misery of the wicked; and nothing said, in all the New Testament, concerning the nature of that misery, that would induce us to believe that it will be without end, but plainly the contrary; we cannot
be

be at a loss to understand those words as signifying, what they commonly do in good authors, an *age, period of duration*, whether longer or shorter.

Mr. S. will not impose on any judicious, candid reader, by such observations as the following, upon the amount and validity of his New Testament proof of eternal misery. "The difficulty of my design hath not so much consisted in finding evidence of eternal punishment in the scriptures, as in making a selection from the proofs, which are too numerous to be all of them recited." Poor man! I should have met with difficulty too, in making a selection of *proofs* of eternal misery, among texts of scripture which in reality are *no proofs* of any such thing. This would have been an insurmountable difficulty in my way. But, if I had taken up the New Testament with this belief, that eternal sin and misery are *productive of the greatest glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom*, I might, doubtless, have fancied that I found proof there of eternal sin and misery. This most grossly corrupt and absurd system would so fascinate my imagination, that I should imagine I saw proof of eternal sin and misery, in almost every text that fell under my eye. Mr. S.'s plan of divine benevolence and of eternal misery, has helped him to the discernment of *proof* of eternal misery, which he would not otherwise have seen, or suspected. This idea induced me to destroy this system of the divine benevolence, at the beginning of my examination of his book; that the

impartial

Impartial reader might see, not only the falsehood and absurdity of such a system, but its baleful tendency in the exposition of the sacred scriptures. The same corrupt system, as I shall quickly show, hath had the same effect on that great and good man, Dr. Edwards, and exposed him to numberless absurdities, and corrupt expositions of scripture.

Not content with producing a great number of passages from the New Testament, which only speak of the punishment, or future misery of the wicked, without any regard to the perpetuity of that punishment, or misery; Mr. S. proceeds to cite several passages from the Old Testament, which, indeed, speak of sufferings which the wicked incur, but not of their perpetual duration: so that they are of no avail to him, as it is incumbent on him, to produce such as positively determine the eternal existence of sin and misery amongst men.

Page 79. "Job xxi. 30. The wicked is reserved to the day of destruction, they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath. Ps. ix. 5. Thou hast destroyed the wicked; thou hast put out their name for ever and ever. Verse 17. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. xi. 6. Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup. xxxvii. 20. But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume, into smoke they shall consume away. lxviii. 2. As wax melteth

eth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God. cxiv. 12, 13. Blessed is the man whom thou teachest out of thy law; until the pit be digged for the wicked. cxlv. 20. The Lord preserveth all them that love him; but all the wicked will he destroy. Prov. xi. 7. When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish." Upon this Mr. S. asks, "how can a wicked man's expectations perish at death, if he is to be saved?" There are several answers near at hand; and Mr. S. might easily have seen them, upon a very little reflection. The wicked man's salvation, in the next, or any future state of being, does not depend upon his expectations; but on the benevolent plan of God. Besides, a man may think himself qualified for salvation, when he really is not. It is surprising that Mr. S. should admit such a question into his mind; much more, that he should put it down on paper.

"Prov. xvi. 4. The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. xxiv. 19, 20. Fret not thyself because of evil men, for there shall be no reward to the evil; the candle of the wicked shall be put out. Ezek. iii. 19. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Dan. xii. 2. And many of them that sleep, shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Job xi. 20. But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.

short. xx. 5, 7. The triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of hypocrites but for a moment, yet he shall perish forever. Ps. xxxvii. 38. The end of the wicked shall be cut off. cxii. 10. He shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away; the desire of the wicked shall perish. Job. xxxi. 5. Is not destruction to the wicked? and a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity? Mal. iv. 1. The day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, and leave them neither root nor branch. Ps. i. 5, 6. The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, the way of the ungodly shall perish. Prov. i. 26, to the end I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh: when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction as a whirlwind; then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer: they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them."

When the reader reflects, that the covenant of *circumcision*, the ordinance of the *passover*, the *priesthood* of Aaron, the *mountains*, and numberless *statutes, laws, and ordinances* delivered to Israel, were all said to be *eternal*, or *everlasting*, to be *for ever*, &c. And that the self same words are used as when the *destruction, misery, punishment*, &c. of the wicked are some-

times spoken of; he will readily be convinced that he must allow the covenant of *circumcision*, the ordinance of the *passover*, the *priesthood of Aaron*, &c. to be strictly eternal; or that the future misery of the wicked will not be strictly eternal; as the same original words are used in both cases. That the destruction, misery, shame, punishment, &c. of the wicked are said to be *eternal*, *everlasting*, or *for ever*, is no more proof that they will be without end, than that those other things will be without end, many of which have long since ceased to be.

Before I began this examination of Mr. S.'s scripture proof of eternal misery, I observed, that I should consider the scriptures Mr. S. adduced as proof of eternal misery, as objections against the salvation of all men. And it must be conceded that, if the holy scriptures plainly assert the doctrine of eternal misery, as the punishment which is to be inflicted on some men after this life, the doctrine of universal salvation ought to be given up. It is clearly and decidedly my opinion that Mr. S.'s scripture proof of eternal misery fails of being sufficient proof of such misery; and that, consequently, it fails of being a sufficient, or valid objection against the doctrine of universal salvation.

I should now pass to the consideration of some other objections against the doctrine of universal salvation; were it not for some observations which Mr. S. has annexed to his scripture proof of eternal misery, that seem to require some remarks. The first
of

of his observations that I shall take notice of, is on p. 84. "There is a wonderful variety of expressions, in both parts of the holy volume, representing the awful and *conscious* misery of sinners; nor are they like the expressions of men. Neither any single man, nor any combination of men, without the holy spirit of God, could have produced such a diversity of descriptions on this subject, and all of them forcibly depicting the utter ruin, and misery *without end* of impenitent sinners." If Mr. S. had produced a single passage of scripture, that expressly declared the future misery of impenitent sinners, such as die in a state of impenitency, to be *conscious*, or *without end*; he might, with some shew of grace, have made such an observation. But since he absolutely has not done this, as the impartial reader has seen, I think the observation comes from him with a very ill grace. And I cannot more charitably account for such an observation, than by imputing it to his extreme fondness for a favorite hypothesis. Experience teaches us abundantly, that human nature is capable of prejudice in favor of certain systems of doctrine, and of conceiving a very great fondness for some peculiar tenets, both in philosophy and divinity. And, though we might rather expect, in this late and illumined age of the world, that the dark and gloomy doctrines of the Convent, Nunnery, or Hermitage, would not find many very warm advocates; yet we see there are some, who still admire the doctrines of a dark and popish age.

Another

Another observation begins on the 25th page, and is this ; " Perhaps, many of us who teach in the church, have erred in our public instructions, by very much confining our scripture proofs, to those passages, where the words eternal, everlasting, and for ever, are used ; which hath led our hearers to think there are no other proofs ; and that if these can be in any degree weakened, the doctrine is in the same proportion made uncertain. But this is far from being the fact. All those expressions which deny any future good to the sinner ; which deny a future forgiveness ; which deny an end to his sorrows ; which speak of his end or last state as miserable ; which deny him those blessings that compose heaven ; or that represent his character fixedly an evil one, without any change to take place ; and many other besides these, are as strong proof of endless punishment, as the words eternal and everlasting would be, in the endless sense of them."

If Mr. S. and some others, who are fond of the doctrine of eternal misery, should agree to disuse those equivocal phrases *eternal, everlasting, and forever* ; I shall recommend it to the friends of a more catholic and liberal system of divinity, to assume and use those very phrases, in proof of universal salvation. For when we consider that a subject of such vast importance, as that of the eternal state of a great part of mankind, is expressed by the sacred writers, in language so very dubious and uncertain as those phrases are in their original Greek ; we cannot suppose that
these

these sacred writers meant, that the eternal state of a great part of mankind will be miserable. If they did, they certainly were not honest men; for nothing was easier for them than to have used indubitable language. When speaking of the future state of the righteous, St. Paul, without the least difficulty could say, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." This language of St. Paul is clear, plain, and certain. No true christian can doubt of the eternity of his future happiness, unless he doubts of the grounds or reality of the apostle's persuasion. When this same apostle speaks of the future state of the wicked, he calls it *death*, *destruction*, *deavouring*, and once only he uses that dubious epithet *everlasting*. If we were entirely unacquainted with what this apostle says of universal salvation; yet we could never persuade ourselves, that he entertained the least idea, that eternal misery would be the punishment of wicked men after death. He was a very thorough adept in Greek, as well as Hebrew, literature. He knew all the powers and idioms of the Greek language; and could as easily have expressed the *everlasting, endless* misery of the wicked, had he believed in it; as the *everlasting, endless* happiness of the righteous.

Further, whenever Mr. S. will produce clear and indubitable

indubitable expressions of scripture, which deny any future good to the sinner ; or future forgiveness ; or which deny an end to his sorrows ; which speak his final state to be miserable ; which deny him those blessings that compose heaven ; or that represent his character fixedly an evil one, without any change to take place ; I will frankly acknowledge to him that such scripture expressions are a strong proof of endless punishment. But till he is certain of being able to do this, I should not advise him entirely to drop the use of those doubtful expressions, *eternal, everlasting, for ever* ; because, so long as he is resolved to hold the doctrine of eternal misery, it were better for him to have some doubtful proof, than none at all.

Another observation is on p. 86. " Further, all the promises of final salvation, which are made to persons of a certain character, and to certain graces, most strongly imply that some shall not be saved. Why are the gospel promises made in this way, if all men indiscriminately are to share in the benefits ? "

" He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved ; and he that believeth not shall be damned. " No good christian wishes to enjoy heaven on easier terms than those ; nor does he believe that any person ever will. No rational consistent man expects to *inherit the promises* of the gospel, without *faith* and *patience* ; or to enter heaven without holiness. The reason why gospel promises are made to a certain character

character is, that the good things promised belong only to a certain character.

Further, Mr. S. observes, p. 86. "The scripture exhortations, to diligence, watchfulness, perseverance, striving to the end, imply, that some men will conduct in such a manner, as not to obtain ;" in the present life ; if Mr. S. had added those words, all would have been right. He goes on ; "Final redemption in another world is the gospel prize, and if men cannot miss of this," in this life, if Mr. S. pleases ; "there seems to be no propriety in such exhortations ;" so say I.

"It is the general tenor of scripture, that men are in a dangerous situation, and that there is some evil to be avoided." If Mr. S. is writing to men, who suppose that no evil awaits mankind, and that all will be happy in the next state of being, whether virtuous or vicious in this ; there may be some pertinency in such kind of observations ; though I should regret the time spent in writing to such stupid animals..

Mr. S. among other miscellaneous things, makes a very kind, obliging concession to the universalists, p. 89. We will make a supposition, (though I only allow it as a supposition) the most favorable to the Universalists, which they themselves can demand.—That there are few passages, which will bear the construction they wish to put upon them ; it is also true, that all such passages will bear another construction. . If the universal construction, appears

appears either to be a constrained one, or contrary to the general tenor of scripture ; and the other construction be perfectly consistent with the general tenor of scripture ; common sense and candor will determine it to be the true one."

- 6 As to suppositions so kindly and graciously made as the above by Mr. S. ; I am sure every universalist, throughout the United States, and the world, must feel the warmest emotions of gratitude, at his very heart, for the indulgence graciously vouchsafed him, by the most generous and munificent author. I hardly know how to express my sensibility to so great a benefactor ; especially when I consider, that the noble author of the above amazing supposition, is far beyond all possibility himself, of ever wanting a concession, or supposition, of that, or of any other kind, from the universalists. As to constrained and natural interpretations of scriptures adduced in this controversy, Mr. S. and I must consent that the public judge of our interpretations of scripture. For my part, I am entirely willing to leave the matter on this decision.

Mr. S. has made some observations on the words used to describe the continuance of the future punishment of sinners, and on their meaning in the original languages, Hebrew and Greek.

Page 91. 1st. " It is a well known fact, that the Hebrews and Greeks, in whose respective languages the Old and New Testaments were written, understood the punishment described to be eternal ;
and

and the descendants of those nations who now have the best knowledge of the power and meaning of words in these languages, understand them so to this day. It is conceived, this is a sufficient reply to all modern criticisms on this ground, against the doctrine of eternal misery." Does Mr. S. mean, that the Hebrews and Greeks understand the future punishment of the wicked to be eternal, in the endless sense, merely from the force and meaning of the words used to signify the duration of that punishment, or from some other considerations? if from the force and meaning of the words; I would ask, whether the Hebrews understood the covenant of circumcision to be everlasting, in the endless sense, from the natural meaning of the word *olam*, or its derivative? but that covenant has ceased to be, for seventeen hundred years. How is this? the word *olam* does not naturally signify a duration without end; or Moses made use of a wrong word, in describing the perpetuity of the covenant; or the Hebrews do not judge of the perpetuity of any thing, merely from the force of the word *olam*. If the word *olam* naturally signifies a duration without end, Moses certainly was unhappy in his choice of that word, to define the duration of the covenant of circumcision. The Hebrews are as fully persuaded of the perpetuity of their covenant of circumcision, as they are of the perpetuity of the future punishment of sinners. But if the Hebrews, with Moses at their head, are all mistaken as to the natural force and

H h

meaning

meaning of the word *olam*, in one instance, they may be in others.

If it be said that, neither Moses nor the Hebrews may be mistaken as to the natural meaning of the word *olam*; and that, when it was applied to signify a limited duration, it was used in its figurative, and not in its natural meaning; if this be so, then whenever the word *olam* is applied to define the duration of any thing, we must determine whether it be used in its natural, or figurative, endless, or limited sense, by the nature and circumstances of the thing whose duration is defined. And this is just what I have said before. I desire to know of what importance it is, in this controversy, whether the word *olam* naturally, or figuratively, signify duration without end; when it is, or must be, conceded, on all hands, that, to determine its real present meaning, in every instance where it is used, we must consider the nature and circumstances of the subject described. If the word *olam* have not one fixed meaning, it is of no importance whether the meaning it ever has, be natural, or figurative, that I can see. If others feel disposed to contend about its natural and its figurative, meaning, they may contend without me. All that I consider of importance in the matter, is, that the word *olam* has not one fixed, permanent meaning; and that, therefore, whenever it is applied in the description of the duration of any object, the nature and circumstances of that object are ever to be consulted, to find its real meaning.

This

This being the case, I beg to know of what importance Mr. S.'s observation is, that the Hebrews considered the future punishment of the wicked to be eternal, in the unlimited sense? Or does he suppose that Americans are so stupid and intractable, as to be entirely unqualified to consider the subject of future misery; and that, whenever this matter is to be investigated, we must instantly apply to some of the circumcised race?

This seems to be his meaning. For, after having observed that the Hebrews *understand the punishment described to be eternal*, and that they have the best knowledge of the language in which that punishment is described; he adds, *It is conceived, this is a sufficient reply to all modern criticisms on this ground, against the doctrine of eternal misery*. So that whenever we are taken with a critical fit, concerning the doctrine of future misery, we must immediately apply to a Hebrew physician for a cure.

As to the Greeks, allowing Mr. S. to be perfectly acquainted with the opinions, both of the ancient and modern Greeks, concerning future punishment, and the meaning of the words *aion* and *aionios*; the same remarks which we made on the Hebrews might be sufficient here. But to give satisfaction to the reader, I will cite a few passages in which these words are used. And I will endeavor to make the matter intelligible to a mere English reader. I will take some of those passages referred to by Mr. S. from Dr. E. in which these Greeks are allowed
sometimes

sometimes to signify a limited, at others, an unlimited duration.

Matt. xii. 32, is the first passage referred to by Mr. S. from Dr. E. in which, he says, the word *aion* signifies a temporary duration. The words are "And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither *in this world*, neither in the world to come." *In this world; en touteo too aioni.*—Here the reader sees the Greek word *aion*, rendered *world*. Here Mr. S. after Dr. E. says, it signifies a *temporary duration*. But why not an eternal duration. Plainly, because those two great and good men, Mr. S. and Dr. E. suppose that this world will have an end, at least, as to its present form. Then the nature of the subject, in this instance, determines the duration intended by the word *aion*.

Matt. vi. 13. is the first passage referred to by Mr. S. after Dr. E. in which, they say, the word *aion* signifies an *endless duration*. The words are, "And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, *for ever*." *For ever; eis tous aionas.* Here is the same Greek word, only now used in the plural number. And Mr. S. and Dr. E. agree that it must here signify an *endless duration*. But why not a temporary duration, as in the other instance? If the word had a fixed meaning, whether it were natural, or figurative, temporary, or eternal; this could not be the case. It would not signify temporary,

porary, in one place ; and endless in another. But so it is ; it must here signify an *endless duration* ; though, just now, it signified a *temporary* one. Plainly, because it is now found in an ascription of power and glory to the *eternal God*.

Another instance of the temporary sense of *aion* according to Mr. S. and Dr. E. is Matt. xiii. 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29. In each of these four verses we find the word *aion* and in each of them it appears to have the same meaning. Verse. 22. " He also that received seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word, and the care of *this world*, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful." Here the word *aion*, which is rendered *this world*, may have a temporary meaning. And if we ask, in this case, why it must have this meaning ? the answer must be, that *this world* will have, according to its nature, or the divine determination, but a temporary duration. A next instance of the *endless* duration signified by the word *aion* is Matt. xxi. 19. " And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon but leaves only ; and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforth *for ever*. And presently the fig-tree withered away." *Let no fruit grow on thee henceforth* eis ton *aionon*, *for ever*. But why is the meaning of *aion* extended, in this instance, to signify perpetuity, or endless duration ? plainly, that it is conceived by Mr. S. and Dr. E. that fruit would not be likely to grow on a fig-tree after it had

had *withered away*. And no good naturalist will feel himself disposed to controvert their opinion.

At present, I cannot consider it necessary for the reader's information, that I should proceed any farther in tracing the meaning of the word *aion*.

There is not a single instance to be produced, in the whole New Testament, where this word is used, in which we must not have recourse to the nature or circumstances of the subject mentioned, to satisfy ourselves, whether the word *aion* mean a *temporary* or *endless* duration. And after we have in this way satisfied ourselves as to its meaning, whether we call that meaning, its natural, or its figurative, meaning, is not worth a dispute. As the subject we are upon, is the duration of future misery, whenever the word *aion*, or its derivative *aionios*, is applied to signify the term of the continuance of that misery, we must recur to the nature of the subject, to other considerations, or to other scriptures, to satisfy ourselves what is its meaning.

When we open Schrevelius's Greek Lexicon, and turn to the word *aion*, we instantly see *ævum*, *seculum*, *mundus*; all substantives which signify transient things, given as its meaning, or true translation into Latin. The true English of which Latin words, is, a *period of duration*, an *age*, the *world*. Its derivative *aionios*, of consequence, must signify *of*, or *belonging to*, a *period of duration*, of an *age*, of the *world*, or *worldly*, &c. Now, though the appearance is that these are the natural, genuine renderings

ings of these words ; and that the nature of the subject under consideration, or other passages of the author we consult, must divert the words from their natural and genuine, to an accidental, adventitious, or figurative meaning, whenever they signify duration without end ; yet, if any of my brethren are disposed to think otherwise, I feel not myself disposed to contend unreasonably about the matter ; as not considering it very material in the present subject. I may say more of these words, hereafter, in my examination of Dr. Edwards's answer to Dr. Chauncey.

Mr. S. proceeds to a 2d remarks, p. 91. " Another fact, as certain as the former, is this ; that of all the learned of all other nations, who have taken the greatest pains in acquiring a thorough knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek languages ; more than nine hundred and ninety nine out of a thousand, have understood the descriptions of the holy scripture to mean eternal misery. They have been as learned, as persevering in enquiry, as apparently honest, as the few who have supposed differently." I am really surprised at such a remark, at this late, enlightened, and inquisitive age of the world. And, if it had not proceeded from a gentleman of Connecticut, I should have been more surprised still. When I reflect on this remark of my brother S., I am instantly transported, in imagination, to Rome, France, Spain, or into some of the German states ; and carried back also seven or eight hundred years,

in

nature of the subject under consideration, is to determine the meaning of the duration signified by the words *aion* and *aionios*; and, at the same time, assumes one of the main points in controversy as granted. The remark is this, "In the solemn subject which we are now considering, there is nothing to limit the words used, and turn them from their natural meaning; there is nothing in the nature of God, who governs the universe; nor in the nature of those created beings who have sinned; nor in the nature of sin, and the words must of course be understood in their natural sense." *Natural sense*, if this will be more pleasing to Mr. S. than accidental or figurative, sense. If Mr. S. really be such a novice in this controversy, as not to know that those, whom he calls universalists, strenuously maintain that there is a very considerable something in the nature of God, of sinners, and of sin, which will for ever forbid the words *aion* and *aionios* signifying endless duration, when applied to the future punishment of the wicked; he certainly ought not to have written on the subject. If he did know this, he is inexcusable for writing in such a manner: Nor are we under any extraordinary obligations to him, for conceding that the nature of the subject must determine the meaning of the words *aion*, and *aionios*; this is known to our school-boys. No man can wonder, who has read Mr. S.'s treatise on divine benevolence, that he should not think there is any thing in the nature of God, of sinners, or of sin, to limit the duration of future

future punishment. In that part of his book, we have seen him affirm that *sin and misery are the necessary means of producing the greatest glory and blessedness of God and of his holy, intelligent kingdom*. After this, who will, who can wonder, that Mr. S. should see nothing in the nature of God, of sinners, or of sin, to limit the duration of future punishment? if it should be so limited, by the repentance and conversion of sinners, and the destruction of sin, as that there should be no sinner or sin in the universe: on Mr. S.'s hypothesis, God and his holy, intelligent kingdom will experience a very considerable diminution of glory and blessedness. But the pernicious errorists of the day, the Universalists, are so heretical as to believe, that it would conduce much to the honor and glory of God, and to the happiness of the intelligent universe, if all sinners were convinced, converted, and made happy, and all sin for ever banished from the moral world; and universal holiness and happiness should thenceforth reign during a pleasurable immortality.

Another observation Mr. S. makes, which requires some notice. P. 102. "It is known, that the heathen of every age and country, have had ideas of happiness and misery, in the invisible world to which men go at death. They have had their good and evil deities; demons delighting in happiness, and others delighting in misery. Many of them have described the kinds of happiness and misery, that will be experienced; and the characters of those

those who are destined to the different ends. *They have also represented these two states to be eternal.*" That the most ancient and renowned heathen nations, the Persians, Egyptians, Thracians, Greeks, Celts, and Romans have entertained ideas of future happiness and misery ; that they have had their good and evil demons ; that they have described the kinds of happiness and misery that would be experienced ; and the characters of those who would be happy or miserable ; all this is conceded to be the fact, and the truth of ancient history ; but that these ancient heathen nations, above named, represented the two states of happiness and misery to be eternal, is not conceded, nor is it true. Mr. S. ought to have more thoroughly investigated his subject, before he wrote upon it ; or to have written with more caution and diffidence.

To satisfy the reader that Mr. S. hath made a mistaken assertion, when he wrote that the heathen nations *represented the different future states of happiness and misery to be eternal* ; I will produce a few scraps of ancient history. That I may be as concise as possible, I will cite a few passages from Brucker's *Historia Critica Philosophiæ*, by William Enfield, L. L. D.

Vol. 1, p. 49, 50. " The religious system of the Magi was materially improved by Zoroaster. Plutarch, speaking of his doctrine, says, Some maintain, that neither is the world governed by blind chance without intelligence, nor is there one mind alone at the head of the universe ; but, since good and evil
are

are blended, and nature produces nothing unmixed, we are to conceive, not that there is one storekeeper, who, after the manner of an host, dispenses adulterated liquors to his guests, but that there are in nature two opposite powers, counteracting each other's operations, the one accomplishing good designs, the other evil. To the better power Zoroaster gave the name of Oromasdes; to the worse that of Arimanius; and affirmed that, of sensible objects, the former most resembled light, the latter darkness. He also taught that Mithras was a divinity who acted as moderator between them; whence he was called by the Persians, the Mediator." After reciting several fabulous tales concerning the good and evil demon, Plutarch, still reciting the doctrines of Zoroaster, proceeds; The fated time is approaching, in which Arimanius himself shall be utterly destroyed; in which the surface of the earth shall become a perfect plane, and all men shall speak one language, and live happily together in one society.

Here is a perfect mediatorial scheme in miniature. A supreme Deity, an evil Demon, and a Mediator. The supreme Deity and Mediator finally prevailing over the evil Demon; taking mankind out of his hands; renovating the earth, and fitting it up for the pleasurable abode of the united, virtuous and happy society of mankind. The reader cannot fail of being agreeably surprised, at the great and striking similarity between the ideas of Zoroaster and the two apostles, St. Peter and St. John, concerning the
new

new heavens and earth, and the reign of righteousness. Here we have the doctrines of one of the most ancient and enlightened nations of the earth. What does the reader now think of Mr. S.'s assertion, that the heathen represented a future state of eternal misery? Certainly, the Persians did not.

We will pass to the ancient Egyptians. After the historian had given a recital of various opinions and theological notions of the Egyptians, he says, p. 83, 84. "The different nations concerning the state of the soul after death were probably held by different colleges of priests, some of whom were advocates for the doctrine of transmigration, while others held, that the souls of good men, after wandering for a time among the stars, were permitted to return to the society of the gods. Or, the seeming inconsistency of these opinions may be reconciled by means of a conjecture, which naturally arises from the doctrine, that God is the soul of the world, from which all things came, and to which they will return. According to this doctrine it may be conceived, that all souls, being portions of the universal mind, must return to the Divinity; but that since different minds by their union with the body, are stained with different degrees of impurity, it becomes necessary; that before their return they should pass through different degrees of purgation, which might be supposed to be accomplished by means of successive transmutations. According to this system, bad men would undergo the *metempsychosis* for a longer, good men

men for a shorter period; and the Amenthes, or Hades, may be conceived to have been the region, in which departed souls, immediately after death, received their respective designations.

As the Egyptians held that the world was produced from chaos by the energy of an intelligent principle, they conceived, that there is in nature a continual tendency towards dissolution. In Plato's *Timæus*, an Egyptian priest is introduced, describing the destruction of the world, and asserting that it will be effected by means of water and fire. They conceived that the universe undergoes a periodical conflagration, after which all things are restored to their original form, to pass again through a similar succession of changes." Thus we have the Egyptians firm believers in a universal restoration.

As the Ethiopians were a colony from Egypt, we may well suppose that they received their religion, as well as morals, from Egypt.

Under the name of Celts, may be included the Gauls, Britons, Germans, and Northern nations.

Page 100, 101. "On the contrary Pomponius Mela represents the Celts as expecting to pass, after death, into the invisible world. And this notion best agrees with the authorities already cited on this subject, and with the accounts which are given, by various writers, of the funeral ceremonies practised in the Northern nations, particularly that of committing to the funeral pile, or to the sepulchre, whatever had been dear to the deceased. It is also most consonant

consonant to the mythological language of the ancient Edda, which every where represents the future life, as an assembly of good or bad men, in a state of reward or punishment, and only speaks of a return to life, for the purpose of reuniting the soul and body, after the soul has passed through a necessary course of purification, previously to its admission into the regions of the happy. From this state of purgation none were to be excused, except those who had voluntarily exposed themselves to death in battle; and hence it was, that those who fell in war were deemed to have made a glorious and happy exit from life, whilst those who died in sickness were thought to have perished shamefully and wretchedly. To those brave spirits who died in battle, the gates of the palace of Odin were immediately opened; and they were to live in his hall (Valhalla) in the full enjoyment, of every thing which delighted them on earth. Others, who had lived a pious, just, and temperate life, and at last died by sickness, were to be admitted, after the necessary purification, into Gimle, a bright and happy mansion, where they should live for ever: whilst they who had, in this life, been guilty of great crimes, (among which perjury, adultery, and assassination, were reckoned the most heinous) were to be consigned to Hela, where they should remain in punishment till the *twilight of the gods*; a term by which is denoted a general restitution of all things, when after the burning of the world, a new period of existence

existence will commence." Now, my kind reader, you have under your eye, at once, the religion of the Celts, comprehending the Gauls, Britons, Germans, and the various nations of the North. The Edda, their Bible, contains their religion. You here see, among these nations, no idea of eternal misery ; but on the contrary, their united belief of a universal restoration of all things to order, purity, and happiness.

The ancient religion of the Greeks, we have in the writings of Orpheus, to this effect, p. 120, 121, of the forementioned history : " God, from all eternity, contained within himself the unformed principles of the material world, and consisted of a compound nature, active and passive. By the energy of the active principle, he sent forth from himself, at the commencement of a certain finite period, all material and spiritual beings, which partake, in different degrees, of the divine nature. All beings proceeding originally from God, will, after certain purgations, return to him. The universe itself will be destroyed by fire, and afterwards renewed." How far were the ancient Greeks from believing in eternal sin and misery ! How much more rational and consistent theologians and religionists were they, than thousands of Christians of the present age, though blessed with a revelation, which they boast in as coming from God !

The later Greeks, and the Romans, who adopted the Greek theology and philosophy, still retained

K k

the

the idea of a universal return of all inferior divinities, demons, and human souls, to Jupiter, or the supreme Divinity, or soul of the world.

Page 156, 157. "Portions of the ethereal soul of the world being distributed throughout all the parts of the universe, and animating all bodies, hence arise, in the system of the Stoics, inferior Gods, or Demons, with which all nature is peopled." All these divinities they considered as derived from the soul of nature, and as limited in their duration. Chrysippus and Cleanthes, says Plutarch, taught that the heavens, the earth, the air, and the sea, are full of gods; but that none of them are immortal, except Jupiter, to whom all the rest will at length return, and in whom they will lose their separate existence. Demons were divided by the Stoics into superior and inferior: the superior, those who inhabited the sun and stars, which they considered as *ousias psuchikas*, animated substances: the inferior, human souls separated from the body, or heroes. Illustrious men, says Cicero, whose souls survive and enjoy immortality, are justly esteemed to be gods, since they are of an excellent and honorable nature."

Thus, my kind reader, I have given you several scraps of ancient history. You are, perhaps, more indebted to Mr. S. for them, than to me. I had no original intention to produce any thing of this kind, in the present work. But the assertions of Mr. S. induced me to review the history of ancient nations;

tions ; as I was fully persuaded that he must be mistaken.

What should have tempted Mr. S. to hazard an assertion, so entirely destitute of truth, the reader is as capable of judging as I am. However, we have seen that the ancient Persians, Egyptians, Ethiopians, Thracians, Greeks and Romans, the Celts including the Gauls, Britons, Germans, and Northern nations of Europe, all believed in a future state of happiness and misery, reward and punishment ; that sin and misery would come to an end, and all rational creatures, as they proceeded from God, at first, would finally return to him, and form one great and happy society.

Our modern, narrow and contracted views of the divine scheme of creation and moral government, are not to be imputed to the ancients. Their ideas of the divine government of the universe, as they were far more extensive and catholic, so they were far more just and consistent in themselves, as well as more honorable to the great Father of creation.

All the scriptures produced by Mr. S. in support of the doctrine of eternal sin and misery, I have considered as objections against the doctrine of universal virtue and happiness. In the same manner, I have hitherto considered and treated his observations upon the adduced passages of scripture, and all those of importance which have followed. I have now about concluded what I shall say in answer to
Mr.

Mr. S.'s direct proof of eternal misery. One thing more Mr. S. mentions, and seems to consider as of weight, concerning the nature and constitution of man, as attended by the passions of hope and fear; which, he thinks, are far more advantageously addressed, on the system of eternal sin and misery, than on that of eternal virtue and happiness.

Page 105. "It ought further to be considered, that the minds of men are so constructed by their Creator, as to be powerfully moved by addressing the passions of hope and fear. Those who deny this, or who think it is a consideration of little weight in the present inquiry, betray great ignorance both of themselves and of human nature. This is one principal mean, by which God governs his universe of intelligent creatures. In order for this, there must be objects of hope and fear. And we find them in the construction of nature; in the special dispensations of providence; and we also find them revealed in the holy scriptures." On p. 106, speaking of the Universalists, he says, "Though they leave to us the objects of hope; they take away the objects of fear, and these are necessary to be combined in the present state, both for self government and for a public order."

It seems Mr. S. allows, that Universalists have left the motive entire, which is addressed to the hopes of the human heart; but that he charges them with taking away that which peculiarly affects the fears of men. And, in doing this he supposes,

poses, they have removed a principal inducement to self government, and injured the interests of society and of public order. A heavy charge. It ought to have been substantially supported. But not one spark of evidence, in support of this heavy charge, do we find; nor the least attempt towards producing any. But whether this be fair, ingenuous, and gentleman-like conduct in Mr. S, I freely submit to the reader to judge.

However, we will not be disheartened and faint in our minds, on account of an unsupported charge.

We may possibly give some satisfaction to our fellow citizens, and to the world, by endeavoring to show that the charge itself is unjust and unfounded. According to the system of Universalism, God is the Father and the friend of all his creatures. He loves the human race; and has so constructed his scheme of creation and moral government, as to admit the holiness and happiness of every son and daughter of Adam. And, by the introduction of a mediatorial plan of providence, he hath insured the final virtue and happiness of all men, in perfect consistency with his own highest glory, and the greatest felicity of all virtuous beings.

On the opposite system, God is the father and the friend of all virtuous beings, and of all the elect amongst mankind. He loves the elect; and hath so constructed his scheme of creation and moral government, as to admit the holiness and happiness of his

his elect. And, by the introduction of a mediatorial plan of providence, he hath insured the final virtue and happiness of all the elect; and, at the same time, hath left a great, if not the greatest, part of mankind, to be eternally sinful and miserable, for his own greatest glory and blessedness, and the greatest glory and blessedness of his holy intelligent kingdom.

Now, I ask the reason and feelings of mankind, which scheme of creation and providence represents God in the best light, that which includes, and is designed to render virtuous and happy, the whole human race? or that scheme of creation and providence, which excludes, and never was designed to render virtuous and happy, a great part of the human race? I ask again, which scheme of creation and providence is best calculated, in its own nature, to induce mankind to love, and fear, and serve God?

That God, who hath excluded millions of millions of his rational creatures, in one single small province of his dominions, from virtue and happiness, to all eternity, cannot be loved. According to the best ideas mankind are capable of forming of justice, rectitude, and mercy; this is unjust, wrong, unmerciful. At the same time that the mediatorial plan of providence holds out the certainty of the eventual salvation of all men, it positively proclaims, that, "he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved: and he that believeth not shall be damned." It is the invariable language, even of that "grace of
God

God which bringeth salvation to all men," that we must "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, and righteously, and godly in the world;" so that no man has the least right to expect to be happy, before he is virtuous and holy; but must be miserable, so long as he is vicious.

If we cannot consider God as dealing perfectly right, and with kindness and mercy towards all his creatures; we cannot love him: and if we cannot love him we shall not so fear him, as to be induced to obey him. If so, dissoluteness of manners, disorder, and every species of vice will presently prevail.

A reflection Mr. S. made, in the 2d part of his book, whilst treating on the divine benevolence, concerning a loose sense of that word benevolence, was then referred to this part of my examination, to be considered as an objection against universal salvation. The reflection was this, "This loose sense of the word will be very agreeable to sinful minds, and hath a fatal tendency to fix them in the security of death."

Mr. S. lets us know what he means by this *loose sense* of the word benevolence, p. 114. "Benevolence applied to the divine character, in the loose sense that many use the word, means the same as that all creatures will be made happy." This is the loose sense of the word benevolence, when it is so explained, as to signify that God is so benevolent as to will and intend the salvation of all men. This is the composition of the word which is *very agreeable*

to wicked minds, and bath a fatal tendency to fix them in the security of death.

If any doctrine really tends to licentiousness, it is an objection against it. But those who use the word benevolence, in what Mr. S. is pleased to call the loose sense of it, are far from allowing that their sense of the word tends to licentiousness.

The reader, undoubtedly, recollects that, in the first part of this work, I presented him with two schemes of creation and moral government of men. The first of those schemes is that which Mr. S. espouses. The other, that which we consider to be the true one. I could almost be willing to refer the two schemes, without any comment, to the judgment of the reader; to determine which of them has the evil tendency. And, were I satisfied of the good judgment and impartiality of the reader, I should have no hesitation at submitting them as they are. But as it would be a great stretch of charity, to suppose that every reader is both judicious and impartial, I am free to make a few observations on the bad tendency which is suggested. And here, Mr. S., I hope, will permit me to take into consideration the tendency of his scheme of divine benevolence, as well as the other.

The first inquiry, concerning any system of doctrine, ought to be, is it true? If it be true, we need not give ourselves great anxiety about its tendency, or consequences, as no truth has, in its nature, a bad tendency. Evil minds may pervert and abuse truths,
even

even the most sacred. But the reality of truth and the tendency of the perversion of truth are very different things.

That God, of his infinite mercy, through our Lord Jesus Christ, hath made ample provision for the restoration of all men to virtue and happiness; and that, in the result of the divine mediatorial plan, all men will, in fact, be made virtuous and happy: this is the divine benevolence, according to the loose sense of the word, as Mr. S. is pleased to call it.

That God, of his infinite mercy, through our Lord Jesus Christ, hath made ~~ample~~ provision for the virtue and happiness of all men; but, as he never designed the virtue and happiness of all to be the result of the divine mediatorial plan, a part only will be made virtuous and happy, and the rest will be left to spend a sinful and miserable eternity in hell. This is the divine benevolence in the restrained sense of the word; which Mr. S. thinks is the true sense.

According to the loose sense of benevolence, God is good unto all, and his tender mercies are over all his works, in the moral and spiritual, as well as natural meaning. According to the strict and restrained sense of benevolence, though God causes the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust; yet he entertains no design that the evil and the unjust shall ever be

made

made good and just, or ever share in the spiritual and eternal blessing of the gospel kingdom.

In one sense of the word benevolence, God is the Father and the friend of all men, considers and treats the whole race of Adam as his children; designs to make them all virtuous and holy, and finally to collect them all together, in one harmonious and happy society. In the other sense of the word benevolence, God is the Father and friend of the elect only; and these he designs to make virtuous and holy, and finally to collect them together in heaven, where they will be happy for ever: leaving the rest destitute of efficacious grace, to perish in their sins to all eternity.

In one sense of the word, the virtue, holiness, and happiness of the whole human race will redound to the highest declarative glory of God, and the supreme happiness of his intellectual and moral kingdom. In the other sense of the word, the eternal sin and misery of millions of millions of mankind, produce, as necessary means, the greatest glory and blessedness of God, and of his holy intelligent kingdom.

I need to proceed no farther, in contrasting the two very different meanings of the word benevolence. The difference is infinitely great. Our business is to inquire which of these senses of the word benevolence has the evil tendency.

Here, my kind reader, I will appeal, not to your passions, but to your reason. According to one sense
of

of the word benevolence, God is represented as having made, and originally intended, you for virtue, holiness, and happiness. In the other, God is represented as having made, and originally intended, you for eternal sin and misery. Which representation appears to be the most just? In which does God appear to be the most just, and good, and glorious? Does it appear to you to be just, that God should have called you from an eternal sleep in non-entity, where you lay, innocent as himself, and, by an irresistible act of omnipotence, impose existence upon you, that you might sin and suffer to all eternity? Is this reconcilable with your best ideas of the infinitely perfect rectitude of God.

Satan tempts men to sin, and, in this way, occasions their suffering. But Satan never made any man to be sinful and miserable. Whereas, according to one sense of the word benevolence, God made millions of millions of human creatures with express design that they should be eternally sinful and miserable; that he might be glorified, and his holy intelligent kingdom made happy.

Does it give you a most noble and sublime idea of the wisdom, power, and goodness of God, that he hath so constructed the natural and moral system of the universe, that he could not enjoy the highest glory, nor his virtuous intellectual creatures supreme happiness; unless a great part of his intellectual creatures should be eternally sinful and miserable? does this give you an idea of a most amiable

miable and most glorious character? does this character of God attract your esteem and veneration? do you love and adore it?

The sacred scripture tells you, that *God is good unto all*. Was he good to you, when he called you out of nothing into being, to be eternally miserable? the scripture tells you, that *God is love*. Was it an act of love, to give you existence, upon the hard condition, of enduring eternal misery? do you see reason to love, adore, and obey that God who hath so constructed the system of the universe as to make it necessary that you, with millions multiplied by millions, of your fellow creatures, should be eternally sinning and suffering, in order that he may be glorified, and a part of his intelligent creatures be made supremely happy?

But why need I urge this matter any farther? it is impossible, in the very nature of things, that any man should entertain the least veneration for such a character of God, as this sense of the word benevolence gives him. And, if a man can have no veneration for God, he cannot obey him with any more generous disposition, than that with which the wretch labors who is chained to the oar for life, or the condemned criminal in the mines of Peru or Potosi.

In the other sense of the word benevolence, you are led to the contemplation of such a system of creation and moral government, with such a mediatorial dispensation annexed, as comprehends every individual

individual son and daughter of Adam, tenders the virtue and happiness of them all, and will finally present them all before the throne of God with exceeding and eternal joy.

On this plan of creation and providence, you feel grateful to your divine Creator, that he gave you existence. You cordially thank him for your intellectual and moral powers ; and that he hath designed you for immortality. You see your God to be just and good. You feel cause to love him with supreme affection ; and you obey him with great and increasing delight. Such views of our Maker, and of his impartial regard, and universal benevolence to all men, as his creatures, the works of his hands, his children, have a most direct and powerful tendency to induce all men to love God, and obey him with alacrity and cheerfulness. *The goodness of God leads to repentance.* Repentance and obedience are the natural effects of divine goodness, on every ingenuous mind.

But on the plan of partial election, and eternal misery, there absolutely can be no motive, no encouragement, derived from eternal considerations, to love God, to repent of sin, or to obey the gospel. Unless a man knew that he was one of the favorites of heaven ; and that *his name was written in the Lamb's book of life* ; what assurance has he of forgiveness or repentance ? or that his obedience will meet with divine acceptance ? the number of the elect and of thereprobate, was determined from all eternity,

eternity, and cannot be increased or diminished. The elect only were given to Christ. He died for them, and for none else. Perfectly futile and insignificant, therefore, are all the exertions of men upon such a scheme of providence as this. If a man be elected, he will certainly be saved; and if he be not elected, he will certainly be damned. What efficacy then can there be in a man's reading, prayer, meditation, and attendance on divine ordinances, with reference to his future state? all these things can be of no service to a reprobate. And no man, on the plan we are combating, knows that he is not a reprobate. A man, therefore, is at an utter uncertainty, and left in eternal doubt, of what complexion his future state will be, whether happy or miserable; and must remain in doubt, till the general judgment.

It is in vain to tell a man that, *if he believes and is baptized, he shall be saved*. No man, who is endowed with common sense, will believe any such thing, though he be told it ever so often, and ever so solemnly. Go to a prison, with a pardon in your hand from the prince, and tell the rebels, that their prince hath determined to pardon some of them and to execute the rest. Tell them also, that whosoever of them shall repent of their rebellion, and return to their allegiance, shall be pardoned and received to favor. Would they consider this general and indefinite invitation to repentance and return to duty, as consistent with the declaration that

a part of them only were to be forgiven, and the rest to be absolutely executed? would they not have reason to suspect the whole, as a piece of duplicity and imposition? the text in St. Mark, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: and he that believeth not shall be damned;" is palpably inconsistent with a partial election to eternal life. A system of religion so apparently absurd and contradictory holds out no motive to repentance or amendment of life. So far is this system of religion, from encouraging men to abandon vice and practise virtue, that it tends directly, and in its very nature, to the absolute neglect of all religion. There is no motive held out, as derived from any considerations of a future state, to dissuade men from the practice of any vice, or the perpetration of any crimes whatever. If a man be elected, he will be saved, though he cheat, and steal, and swear, and rob, and murder, every day of his life. I well know that electionists, and advocates for eternal misery, do not allow this inference from their doctrines; but this does not prevent every man of common sense from seeing it to be just. And, though we ought not to distress ourselves about the use which evil minds may make, of doctrines that are certainly true; yet, if any doctrine naturally tend to licentiousness, as that of eternal misery and partial election to life, most certainly does, we may well suspect the truth of that doctrine. A man, who holds the doctrines of partial election, and of
the

tehn eternal misery of a great part of the human race, certainly ought to be among the last men in the world, to complain of the evil tendency of any doctrine whatever. For no doctrine that came from Rome, in company with that, can possibly have a more fatal tendency.

Tell a man, that it is the established system of the universe, that men shall be punished eternally, for mere temporary crimes ; and this for the highest glory and blessedness of him who formed this system, and the greatest good of his holy intelligent kingdom ; and, if he be entirely destitute of prejudice and prepossession, he will not believe it.

This doctrine hath ever been fatal to the success of all missions from Rome, either to the eastern or western Indies. This same doctrine hath prevented, more than any thing else, the success of all our missions among the natives of America.

The Indians of the east or west, never entertained the idea of eternal misery, till they were taught it by christians, either of the Popish or Protestant church. And no wonder that they have generally refused a religion, which represents the God of the universe in so unjust and forbidding a light.

Such shocking representations of Christianity have made thousands of infidels and atheists. Had the religion of Jesus been justly represented, as the sacred writers have left it, as a system of divine benevolence, designed and calculated to make all
men

I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

Thus our private and public piety and devotion are encouraged, on the present theory of divine benevolence. Also our faith, and hope, and love, and joy are all perfected, and carried to their highest degree of exercise and excellence.

Let us now go over to the other side of this important question, and contrast this rational and consistent, charming and delightful theory of divine benevolence, with the irrational and inconsistent, dark and distressing theory of eternal misery.

On this theory, we address, both in the family, the closet, and the public assembly, a God who hath made innumerable millions of rational creatures, capable and desirous of eternal happiness, on purpose to make them eternally miserable. We now address a being, who could not be supremely glorious and blessed himself, for so construct a universe of intellectual beings, as to make some of them happy in the highest degree, without awaking an infinite multitude of rational beings from non-entity, and giving those perfect innocents a sinful and miserable eternal existence! Our piety and devotion, our faith, and hope, and love, and joy, are all damped at once. An impenetrable mist, a horror of unutterable darkness, now rests on the divine character, and on all the works and ways of God. With anxious hearts and trembling lips, we address a God, who is

because the reprobate are under no obligation to duty, nor are they capable of sinning. On the theory of eternal misery, your predecessors in this christian ministry, the apostles, miscalculated their addresses, in the same way that you do. To give a specimen or two. St. Paul to the Romans, says, "Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ : To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints : Grace to you and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." Were there no reprobates among the professors of Christianity at Rome? or did St. Paul really make so great a mistake, as to call reprobates *beloved of God*, and to consider them as *called to be saints*, and entitled to *grace and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ*? This manner of address to the church at Rome, on the theory of eternal misery, is a difficulty I cannot get over without help.

There is as great a difficulty in St. Paul's address to the church at Corinth. "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours : Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." I ask whether there were any reprobates in the church at Corinth? One member of this church, we find, was guilty of incest and married his father's wife. If this man was a reprobate St. Paul treated him extremely wrong, both

both first and last. First, in calling him *sanctified in Christ Jesus*, and declaring of him that he was *called to be a saint*. A reprobate can neither be sanctified in Christ Jesus, nor called to be a saint. Secondly, St. Paul treated him very much out of character in commanding that he should be delivered to *satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus*. What ! a reprobate come within a possibility of salvation ! A reprobate guilty of sin, in marrying his father's wife ! We have just demonstrated that a reprobate cannot sin. I cannot get over these difficulties without help. There certainly were no reprobates in the churches of Rome and Corinth ; because St. Paul says of them all, without any exception, that they were *called to be saints*. Was a reprobate ever called by the gospel to be a saint ? Could he accept the call ? If he could not, why was he called ? What propriety, or justice, or goodness, or mercy, could there be in his call ? If he could accept the call, there are not, nor ever were, any reprobates in the world. Here are many questions, and many difficulties, which I am unable to answer, or surmount, on the theory of eternal misery.

The holy Scriptures affirm, that "*God is good unto all, and that his tender mercies are over all his works.*" I desire to know how he is good to the reprobate ? How do they experience his tender mercies ? Is it an act of goodness in God to give a rational and immortal existence to a creature, whom he had previously

viciously reprobated, and destined, to eternal misery ? Is an endless existence, in sin and misery, the effect of the tender mercies of God ? Or are the reprobate excluded, and not comprehended in the word *all*, when it is said *God is good unto all* ? Are they also not considered as any part of the works of God, when it is said that *his tender mercies are over all his works* ? My fathers, brethren, and fellow citizens, are these things no difficulties with you ? or, if they are, how do you get over them, and arrive at perfect satisfaction of mind about them ? Are you blessed with so comprehensive a view of the works and ways of God, as to see darkness to be light ; apparent contradictions perfectly agree ; apparent falsehood to be real truth ; and evident absurdity to be rectified reason ? Have you arrived at so sublime a height, as to look down with sovereign pity, upon those slow, dark, and dubious ways, in which your terrestrial brethren labor to investigate truth ? If so, pray condescend, for once, to instruct a poor, weak brother, though he be, for the present, on the turf, and confined to the laborious methods of searching after truth, such as reading, meditation, and prayer to the *Father of lights*. Pray, let me know how God is good to him, who, from all eternity, was doomed to endless misery ? and how his tender mercies are expressed towards that man, who is destined to lie in the lake of fire, with the devil and false prophet, so long as God shall exist ? Goodness is a disposition to communicate good. Mercy is active pity,
or

or a disposition to afford relief to the miserable. Goodness and mercy in God, if he be good and merciful to those who were born to lie in hell to all eternity, are so different, in their nature and definition, from what are commonly called goodness and mercy among men, that they agree very exactly with the best ideas we are able to form of the most implacable malevolence, and cruel injustice.

To say that the reprobate are free agents, have the means and the day of grace, and misuse them all, and that their day of grace is over at death, and God will then cease to be merciful to sinners forever, is no solution of these difficulties, no answer to the questions. To suppose that all men, by some good use of their moral agency, and of the means, and day of grace, as it is called, may so purify their hearts, and improve their natures, as to become qualified for happiness, is entirely to give up the idea of reprobation. And, if this be given up, the sole reason there is to think, that any men will be eternally miserable is, that they are not qualified for happiness in this life. But as the idea of reprobation is now given up, the pretence that sinners will not repent beyond the grave, or that God will not forgive them, if they should repent, are without all foundation. So that, if the doctrine of reprobation be given up, the doctrine of eternal misery must go with it; and then all men may be saved, and there is an end to the controversy. Indeed,

deed, the fact truly is, that the popish tenet of reprobation must be given up, or it will be past all human art, to make those passages of scripture speak truth, which I mentioned above; that *God is good unto all*, and that *his tender mercies are over all his works*. And if the tenet of reprobation be no longer holden, there can no longer remain any subject of dispute about the salvation of all men. But this I do not expect to see done in my day, though I hope, and pray, that it may be soon done; yea, I firmly believe that truth, which was before error, will live, when error shall be no more. Then the doctrine of partial election, or reprobation, with other absurdities, which have disfigured Christianity for ages, will disappear before the light of sacred truth, as a mist before the rising sun. My fathers and brethren, who believe and often preach the doctrine of eternal misery, must have had these questions occur to your minds, how are the eternal sin and misery of unnumbered millions reconciled with the divine character? What could be a motive with God, to admit so dreadful and horrid a dispensation into his system of moral government? Have you ever, by just reasoning, or by plain passages of scripture, satisfied your minds with the solution of these questions? I was early taught to believe in eternal misery. And, in the first years of my ministry, I made and preached several sermons on the subject of future and eternal misery; and, like a novice, or simpleton, thought I had established the point

point beyond all contradiction. But, if the Spanish Inquisition, or the British Star-chamber, had treated those juvenile laborers as I have done, I should have complained of persecution. I have burned them.

Eternal misery is an infinite punishment. Sin, therefore, to render such a punishment just, must be an infinite evil. But sin, being the action of a finite creature, cannot be infinite. Will you say, that the majesty of the Being against whom sin is committed, gives sin its infinity. Then, give me leave to say, in my turn, that an act of obedience is infinite also. Obedience has equal reference to God, as disobedience. If one be infinite, why not the other? The argument will prove too much. It cannot be a good one. Indeed, it is an inadmissible solecism, to say that infinity is predicable of any action of man. But, to inflict an infinite punishment on a finite crime, is palpably unjust. Eternal misery, therefore, is a method of government God never will adopt. If you have no better topic, whence to borrow your argument, for the justice of eternal punishment, than the infinity of sin, you cannot long keep yourselves in countenance, unless it be by numbers, and maintain such a doctrine.

And, if eternal punishment be not reconcilable with the justice, no man will undertake to reconcile it with the goodness, of God, or with any other divine attribute.

As to the motive, which could excite the divine being to admit such a dispensation of providence into his system of moral government; it cannot be any view to his own glory, or the happiness of any of his creatures. By the glory of God, here, must be intended the illustrious display of the divine attributes. But, pray, what attribute of God is illustriously displayed in the eternal misery of sinners? It is a method of government that is demonstrably unjust. And, in the very face of it, it is so bungling and awkward a method of government, that infinite wisdom will never admit it. What should we say of the mechanic, who could not construct a machine, without leaving some important wheel or spring palpably out of place, and disordered? Sin and misery, moral and physical evils, are the greatest evils and disorders in the universe. And can you seriously believe that God will admit their eternal continuance? It is an easy matter to account for their introduction, and temporary continuance; but for their eternal continuance, I despair of ever seeing any rational or consistent account.

To make a defective creature, if, at the same time, the methods of divine government be such, as to supply all the defects of that creature, and to place him in such circumstances as will certainly, in the event, render his existence a real benefit, or blessing to him; may be considered as perfectly just. But on any other supposition, to make a defective creature, would be unjust and cruel. Accordingy,

Accordingly, before man was created, the mediatorial plan of providence was concerted, a Mediator provided, a *lamb slain from the foundation of the world*, and every thing adjusted to admit the introduction of a defeasible order of intelligences, and to render such an event a real blessing to those intelligences themselves, an illustrious display of the divine character, and a final good to the universe. In this way, and under these existing circumstances, I conceive, God admitted sin into the system, and said, *Let us make man*. And, when we consider the matter in this light, the whole mystery of the introduction of moral and physical evil, and their temporary continuance in the system, is explained and justified. But to make one individual defeasible creature, to place him in circumstances that will render his existence no blessing, but a curse, and to leave him without remedy in those circumstances, would be the highest injustice to that creature; and can never be admitted as the act of God. Consequently, eternal misery is no part of the plan of God.

But, though it can never be admitted, that eternal misery will be conducive to the divine glory, it may promote the happiness of the righteous. That it is the divine design to continue sin, and misery in the universe, to all eternity, to promote the happiness of the righteous, is a mere conjecture, without the least countenance from reason, or scripture. Men have first determined that the torments of hell will be eternal. Then, as their minds revolted at the
 horrid

horrid idea of eternal misery, they cast about for something to justify so shocking a method of government. And, as nothing appeared to promise fairer, than the glory of God, and the happiness of the righteous ; these were eagerly embraced as reasons of the divine conduct, in perpetuating sin and misery in the universe. But here lies an insurmountable difficulty in my way, that God hath never once intimated, that he would promote the eternal happiness of some, by the eternal misery of the rest of mankind. That the eternal misery of a great part of mankind should be a revealed truth, as is pretended, and that no reason should be given for so astonishing a method of government, is unaccountable. This, however, is the fact. The glory of God, and the happiness of the righteous, have never yet been assigned by God, as the reasons of this conduct. As to the glory of God, in the eternal misery of some part of mankind, it hath been considered. And, when we consult our natures, we find nothing to justify the supposition, that the eternal misery of the wicked will be a subject that will afford happiness to the righteous. Man is naturally sympathetic, pitiful, compassionate. The sight of human misery gives very uneasy sensations, hurts our feelings, and disturbs our enjoyment. The reflection, that a fellow creature deserves what he suffers, does not prevent the operation of sympathy and compassion. Who ever saw a wretch capitally punished, without the greatest emotions, even though
he

he died by the hands of justice? Our nature is such that we cannot feel happy, whilst we see, or know, that others are miserable. And these tender feelings of our nature are encouraged by our religion. We are exhorted and commanded to resemble our Father in heaven, in kindness love and mercy. I wish to know, whether going to heaven will entirely divest us of humanity? Will every delicate, tender, sympathetic sentiment die in our breasts, so soon as we shall reach heaven, that world of eternal love? Will charity also expire in heaven, with every other tender passion? In order to satisfy ourselves fully, that the eternal misery of our fellow creatures will be a mean of promoting our happiness, we ought to be quite certain that heaven will extinguish every spark of humanity within us.

It has been said, if not written, that the saints in heaven will look down into hell, and, beholding the execution of divine justice upon those miserable inhabitants, will rejoice, and feel an increase of real happiness. If this will be the fact, heaven certainly must be filled with a kind of saints entirely unknown in this world. Besides, there is something here supposed, that never will, or can be true. That the saints in heaven will behold the execution of divine justice, in the eternal sufferings of the wicked. Eternal misery hath been demonstrated to be unjust. So that the saints in heaven can never see the justice of God in the infliction of eternal misery. But we will, for a moment, make the supposition,

supposition, that the eternal misery of a part of the human race is a necessary mean of promoting the happiness of the rest. Does this economy appear to agree with the character of infinite wisdom, unbounded goodness, and almighty power, which we unitedly ascribe to God ? Does it not appear unaccountable that infinite wisdom, influenced by unbounded goodness, and aided by almighty power, should not have constructed a universe in such a manner, as to admit the greatest happiness, without requiring, at the same time, the greatest misery ? That God could not make some creatures supremely happy, without making others supremely miserable ? An unbiassed mind will certainly meet with difficulty in believing this, and greater still in accounting for it. Where is the man that would not prefer annihilation, to happy existence, at the expence of the eternal misery of one of his fellow creatures ? If that wretch, in human shape, can be found, he deserves the execrations of all living. He is a monster, and not a man.

On the theory of eternal misery, you see the justice of God eternally sacrificed, his goodness blasphemed, his wisdom reproached, his power reduced to weakness, and his whole character, as Creator and governor of the universe, most shamefully vilified. This, my fathers, brethren, and fellow citizens, is my idea of the matter. You may think otherwise ; I once did. And, that I once thought otherwise, I
ascribe

ascribe wholly to the prejudices of education, example, and authority.

But I will dwell no longer on this gloomy distressing subject of eternal misery. Let us turn our eyes to a more bright and luminous prospect. Come, ascend with me to the top of Pisgah, and let us command a large and ravishing prospect of the promised land. Jehovah said, *Let us make man.* This is enough for me, to know that my existence was the result of the divine will. By this act of his will, in giving me existence, my God made my life, my safety, my eternal welfare his special charge. No fatal harm can ever befall me. If I sin, my God will correct me. And, if I repent, he certainly will forgive me. He had no interest to serve in creating me, but my happiness. My happiness, then, will be the object of all his dispensations of providence towards me, during the whole of my existence. And as my Creator hath made a world of men, they are all his care, equally with myself. The act of creation was a solemn engagement, on the part of the Creator; a covenant, which he will never revoke, to tender forever the happiness of all his creatures.

God knew when he made man, that his nature was defective, that he would abuse his liberty, and fall. Ample provision, therefore, was previously made, in the gracious, mediatorial dispensation of providence, for the introduction of just such a defective creature as man, and just such an event as
his.

daughter of Adam, into voluntary and cheerful submission to Jesus; and the moral government of Jehovah.

Certainly the early predictions, and continued representations, of the Messiah, and his great work on earth, have been delivered to mankind; in the fullest, most universal; grand and sublime language; giving reason to expect a most glorious termination of the gracious plan of God for the redemption and salvation of the world. And now, to see the mediatorial dispensation close, the Mediator re-deliver his kingdom to the Father, and become himself a subject in the grand monarchy of God; leaving one half of mankind in chains of eternal darkness and despair, and completely under the empire of sin and satan, does not seem to answer the prophetic language of Scripture, nor the expectations which had been raised in the world, of the power and extent of the Redeemer's kingdom, or the greatness of saving love.

Only divest yourselves of system, my friends; and lay aside all preconceived opinions, collected from the creeds and confessionals of human composition; and take up the sacred volume of the scriptures, with the sole view of finding truth, under the guidance of the divine spirit; and I am fully persuaded you will not find that the Bible will lead you into the belief of the system of eternal misery. Your ideas will be enlarged, and your views of saving
love

love extended, till you will embrace a far more rational and consistent plan of God.

What makes me so sanguine in this matter, is my own experience. My ideas were once confined. My views were contracted. I once thought, as some of you, undoubtedly, now do, that a certain number of mankind were selected from the rest, and given to Christ, in what is vulgarly called the covenant of redemption. That he died to redeem and save these. That the rest were left, without efficacious grace, to die in their sins, and to be miserable forever. But now, I find no such doctrines in the scriptures. And I look back on my childish faith with astonishment, regret, and sorrow. With astonishment, that I could ever have embraced such opinions. With regret and sorrow, that one half my life has been thrown away, in that mistaken manner in which I read and studied the holy scriptures. One half my active public life has been spent, in *teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*; though, I hope, not with a pharisaical temper. This will be some disadvantage to me in heaven. I might have gone forward, and taken some more advanced seat in glory, had I pursued divine studies in the right method. If a man's heart be good, it constantly increases in goodness, with the increase of knowledge. But I must be satisfied with some humbler seat in glory. This I am certain of, that divine investigations will not be clogged and impeded

R r

in

wean us from this world, and attach us to heaven and immortality. And, when we look beyond the present scene, and take a prospect of the heavenly, as Moses, on Pisgah, did of the earthly, Canaan; how lost in admiration at the great and glorious events which God will bring into existence, in favor of mankind. For those who are wise, and virtuous, and holy, and useful, in the present state, a new heavens and new earth shall be prepared, a habitation of righteousness, a peaceful and happy abode. Here Jesus, the great author and finisher of our faith, will dwell with the righteous, and be their life and glory. No tears, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor death, shall ever be admitted into the new Jerusalem. All former things have passed away, and a new era hath commenced with the righteous.

And as to those who had indulged vicious inclinations in this life, and misused a convenient state for improvement in virtue and holiness, these cannot be admitted yet into the holy city; but will be placed in a situation as proper for them, and as agreeable with their character, as that the righteous enjoy, is proper for them, and agreeable with their characters. God is still their Creator, and he will never forsake the work of his hands. One great mistake we are apt to make is, not to allow the Creator and Governor of the universe a proper time to complete his work. We are disposed to hurry, not into the midst of things only, but into their final result.

result. We forget that *one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day, with the Lord.*

What led me first to careful and diligent enquiry, and then to suspect, and finally to determine positively, that we had been, for ages, mistaken with regard to the time of the final result of the mediatorial plan, was, the infinite multitudes of the human race, who die out of this life, and the present state of human existence, at every age, from one moment's continuance in life, in this world, to a hundred years of earthly existence.

The child of one minute old, and the sinner who dies at a hundred years of age, are both alike consigned to endless misery in hell, according to the most generally received doctrine. Is this uniform mode of treatment of persons, who come to the judgment seat, in circumstances so amazingly different, perfectly consistent with the infinitely accurate justice of the supreme moral government? This is a problem which I cannot solve. And further still, we see an infinite variety in the present conditions of men. Some are born of virtuous, others of vicious, parents. Some in circumstances easy and affluent, others in the lowest walks of life, and in circumstances of want and indigence. Some are favored with a good literary and religious education, others are left in their native ignorance, and early instituted in a vicious course of life. Unnumbered millions are doomed to a life of servitude, and the lowest menial

al

VALUABLE WORKS

Lately published by THOMAS & THOMAS.

The Rev. ELHANAN WINCHESTER's LECTURES on the PROPHECIES, in 2 Vol. 8vb.
price 4 dollars and 25 cents.

THOUGHTS on the DIVINE GOODNESS ;
translated from the French of Petitpierre, price
75 cents.

In the press ; Dr. HUNTER's LIVES of the PATRIARCHS ; in 4 volumes 8vo. to which is added the HISTORY of DEBORAH, RUTH and HANNAH ; and also the HISTORY of JESUS CHRIST ; the latter of which is now first published in this country.









1

1

